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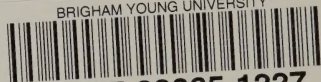
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AN AMERICAN MISCELLANY  
VOLUME I



# AN AMERICAN MISCELLANY

BY  
LAFCADIO HEARN

ARTICLES AND STORIES NOW FIRST COLLECTED BY  
ALBERT MORDELL

VOLUME I



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## INTRODUCTION

### I

Practically all traces of Hearn's early writings in America have been hitherto lost. He came to Cincinnati in 1869, at the age of nineteen, and left for New Orleans in October, 1877. During these eight years he had been constantly writing and publishing. Almost nothing of this work has ever been discovered, and in fact, even the titles of his stories or articles have not hitherto been known. All that we have had so far from the Cincinnati period has been an extract from his famous Tanyard Murder story, which appeared in the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, November 9th, 1874. Dr. Gould included this passage in his book *Concerning Lafcadio Hearn*. He also reprinted two trifles, an editorial and a story from *Ye Giglampz*, a comic weekly edited by Hearn and Farny in the summer of 1874.

It is also known that Hearn once described an ascent he had made up the spire of St. Peter's Cathedral, and that he wrote romances about the lives of the colored people. But not even the dates on which he was employed as a reporter on the *Enquirer* and the *Commercial* were definitely fixed. There was no doubt that he was on the *Enquirer* in 1874, and that when he wrote the *Letters to a Lady*, in 1876, (published in *Letters from the Raven*), he was on the *Commercial*. After he left Cincinnati in October, 1877, he wrote thirteen articles for that paper under

the name of Ozias Midwinter. A brief summary of these was given by Milton Bronner, in his *Letters from the Raven*.

Bronner tells us that Henry Watkin, a printer, got Hearn a position on a commercial paper, edited and published by a Captain Barney, and that Hearn solicited advertisements and contributed articles to it. One of these was a proposal to cross the Atlantic in a balloon anchored to a floating buoy. (The suggestion no doubt came from Poe and was not long ago carried out in reality without the need of a buoy). By consulting Rowell's newspaper directories, for the early seventies, I found that a weekly trade paper called the *Trade List* was edited by L. Barney. I received further confirmation that this was the name of the paper upon which Hearn was employed when I consulted the Cincinnati City Directory for 1872, which gives Hearn's occupation as Assistant Editor of the Cincinnati *Trade List*. If copies of the *Trade List* exist, some early Hearn writings will be discovered there. I could not locate a copy in any of the libraries in Cincinnati.

Hearn's friend, Joseph Tunison, also says in an article in the *Bookbuyer*, May 1896, that Hearn was a book agent, a proofreader, and then a writer of articles for a printer who published a weekly paper.

Hearn himself later, on several occasions, briefly referred to his life and work in Cincinnati. He wrote to his half-sister from Japan that after having been an accountant and a messenger-boy, he became for a year and a half, a boarding-house servant, lighting fires, and shoveling coal for food and the privilege of sleeping on the floor of the smoking room. He thus found time to read and write stories which were published in cheap weekly papers, long extinct. He was never paid for these early efforts. He

tried, he says, also other occupations, canvassing, and show-card writing.

When Hearn first came to Cincinnati, he slept in dry goods boxes, in grocers' sheds, in a boiler on a vacant lot and in a hayloft. In the daytime he tried to forget realities and nourished romantic dreams in the public library where he was also later employed for awhile. He did not meet Watkin until a few months after his arrival in Cincinnati. He became errand boy and helper to Watkin, sweeping his shop, and sleeping on a paper-shavings bed. In an autobiographical letter, published in *Harper's Weekly*, October 15, 1904, he says he was a proof-reader (with the Robert Clarke Company), a subordinate mailing clerk in some printing office, and also a writer for weekly newspapers.

In a letter to Professor Basil H. Chamberlain, Hearn tells how at nineteen he was dropped in an American City (Cincinnati), and slept in the streets and worked as a servant, waiter, printer, proof-reader, hack writer. In another letter to Chamberlain, he refers to a serial story he wrote for a weekly family paper which paid no one. This was about 1873 (probably earlier), for Hearn places the time in the year Chamberlain came to Japan. Hearn gives the plot. It is of an indestructible man created by chemistry who ate diamond dust and steel filings. The story reminds one of the Robots, in R.U.R.

In Hearn's own account of *Ye Giglampz* (*Enquirer*, October 4, 1874), included in this volume, he also refers to an article which he wrote on Farny's most famous etching for a "weakly" periodical in days gone by.

None of Hearn's articles or stories written for those unnamed weekly papers has ever been found. By referring

to Rowell's Newspaper Directories, I got up a list of the weekly papers current in Cincinnati in the early seventies, but then I found there were few copies extant in Cincinnati of these weeklies for that period.

## II

I have been successful, however, in discovering the more important articles and stories Hearn wrote for the *Enquirer* and the *Commercial*. I have identified about a hundred of Hearn's contributions to these two papers alone. These writings by him have hitherto been complete *terra incognita* to Hearn biographers and students.

I might call the account of my discovery of Hearn's newspaper articles not only in the *Enquirer* and in the *Commercial*, but in the *New Orleans Item* and the *New Orleans Times-Democrat*—"A ROMANCE OF LITERARY DISCOVERY."

My first knowledge that there were articles by Hearn in the Sunday issues of the *Enquirer*, came from reading the article by Hearn's editor, Colonel John Cockerill, who described how Hearn came into the office looking like a brownie and deposited his article, and how later, after having written many articles, he was employed as a reporter. Cockerill, however, gave no dates.

Cockerill's article originally appeared in the *New York Herald*, and was copied in *Current Literature*, for June 1896, and partly reprinted by Dr. Gould and Nina Kennard in their books on Hearn. Cockerill said Hearn wrote special articles for the Sunday edition as thoroughly excellent as anything in the magazines, and that he knew Hearn to have twelve and fifteen columns in a single issue. Twelve and fifteen columns by Hearn in one issue of a

paper and never collected! When I went to the Congressional Library in Washington and tried to find the Sunday issues of the *Enquirer* for 1874, and also for 1873 and 1875, they were all missing!

I thought then there might possibly be articles by Hearn in the Sunday issues of the *Commercial*, on which I knew he worked, in 1876. And my first Hearn discoveries were the articles in the *Commercial*. A quotation from one of the Ozias Midwinter letters given in Gould's book, page 144, aided me in my first discovery. Hearn says there that he met some one in New Orleans who confirmed an opinion which he himself had expressed in the *Commercial* nearly three years ago that "a knowledge of *secret septic*<sup>1</sup> poisons (probably of an animal character) which leaves no trace discoverable by most skilful chemists, is actually possessed by certain beings who are revered as sorcerers by the negroes." I found the date of this Ozias Midwinter letter was December 27, 1877; "nearly three years ago," would be about December 1874, or the winter of 1875. But Hearn was then on the *Enquirer*. However, turning the pages of the *Commercial*, I came accidentally across an article, called *The Poisoners*, in the issue of December 12, 1875. This is possible the article Hearn referred to, I thought. And most certainly such turned out to be the case. The first part of the article was all about Voodoo sorcerers, and of their "use of some potent corrosive poison, *secretly*<sup>2</sup> administered" and their "knowledge of certain subtle poisons, apparently of a violent *septic* nature." (I quote from this article.) The rest of the article was a scholarly discourse on secret poisons. I also recalled a statement by his friend

<sup>1</sup> Italics mine.

<sup>2</sup> Italics mine.

Tunison, on the *Bookbuyer*, May 1896, page 210, to the effect that Hearn "was at one time for instance, deeply absorbed in the studies of poison and of the criminal history in which they figure." Hearn later recurred to the subject of secret poisons in *His Two Years in the French West Indies*, and in some uncollected articles.

However, I thus discovered and identified this article, having Hearn's own statement and that of his intimate friend as authorities.

I turned back the pages of the volume of the *Commercial* for a month or two previous to the date of the poison article, December 12, 1875, and noted titles like the following:

*Old and New, The Demi-monde of the Antique World*, November 28, 1875; *Notes on the Utilization of Human Remains*, November 7, 1875; *A Bird-store Reverie*, October 25, 1875.

The very title of the second of these articles made me think it must be by Hearn. Who but him, with his interest in the gruesome, would have ever written on a topic like this, *The Utilization of Human Remains*? I noted the date and later ordered the article photostated with many others, I knew or suspected to be by Hearn. At home I examined the article at leisure and my belief proved correct.

The evidence for the Hearn authorship turned out more certain than if Hearn had signed it. He says in the article; "Some years ago in a private museum in Bangor, North Wales, the writer was shown a number of beautifully wrought lances and javelins brought from various places in the South Seas. . . . A lance had . . . not less than one hundred barbs, principally of shark's teeth," etc. Hearn had spent some time as a youth in Bangor. In a letter to

Krehbiel dated 1877 (*Life and Letters*, vol. 1, p. 171), he repeats what he said in this article. He speaks of a Chinese gong and says: "A gentleman in Bangor, North Wales, who had a private museum of South Pacific and Chinese curiosities, exhibited one (a gong) to me. It was hanging amidst Fiji spears beautifully barbed with shark's teeth" etc. Should any one be still skeptical as to this similarity of allusion, I would ask him to compare the remarks in this article about candles made of human fat and the candlestick made of the right hand of an executed criminal, as quoted here from Southey's notes to *Thalaba*, with Hearn's earlier reference to these subjects in the summer of 1874, when he edited *Ye Giglampz*, in his *Salutatory*, as it is reprinted in Gould's book, p. 39.<sup>1</sup>

Thus by the reprint of a trifle in Gould's book and the publication of a letter by Mrs. Wetmore, I have been able to identify beyond doubt an important article.

The wonderful *Bird Store Reverie*, October 25, 1875, I first identified by Hearn's interest in both serpents and birds. He wrote about serpents in his *Two Years in the French West Indies*. His interest in birds remained also a life passion and he lectured to his students on birds in English poetry. His reference to the artist Alma-Tadema and to Holmes' novel, *Elsie Venner*, would have been sufficient to identify Hearn's authorship for he often refers to them in his letters and articles. I must say something, however, about an even surer clue to Hearn's authorship, the reference to Lytton's *The Haunted and the Haunters*, in

<sup>1</sup>"The candle is made of green fat—the fat of men long dead. . . . To procure this candlestick, it is necessary to cut off the right hand of a murderous criminal executed by impalement, and having carefully dried it, to insert the candle in its ghastly grasp."

this article. I have come across references to this story, better known as *The House and the Brain*, more than to any other tale in Hearn's newspaper writings. He always admired this story. As late as 1898, he sent a copy of it to Captain McDonald. He also gives a good analysis of it in his lecture *The Supernatural in Fiction* in (*Interpretations in Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 96 and 98); he considered it, as does Prof. Saintsbury, the greatest ghost story in the English language. He also regarded Bulwer's *Strange Story* as his masterpiece, and was fond of his *The Coming Race*. He often referred to these works in his newspaper articles, both in Cincinnati and New Orleans. He followed Poe, his master, in his worship of Bulwer Lytton.

The study of *The Demi-Monde of the Antique World*, November 28, 1875, is also Hearn's. The classical scholarship there displayed is remarkable, though it may smell somewhat of the lamp. To make the study partly local and timely, he introduces it with an account of the arrest of a prostitute and he concludes it with a tale of her suicide. It pleases him to call her a "Cyprian." Hearn was at the time a police-reporter. He was interested at the time in the worship of Venus. He later wrote to Watkin: "Let me be the last of the idol worshipers, O Golden Venus and sacrifice to thee the twin doves thou lovest,—the birds of Paphos and the Cytheridae." (*Letters from the Raven*, p. 59).

I might add that the reference to Charles Reade's *A Terrible Temptation*, in this article, is another confirmation of evidence of authorship. Hearn regarded this work as Reade's masterpiece, and also cites it often in his newspaper



articles. He mentions it as his own favorite of Reade's works. "I should give the preference" he says, over twenty-five years later, in his *Interpretations of Literature*, vol. I, p. 267), "to an extraordinary book *A Terrible Temptation*, in which there is an excellent study of gypsy character as revealed in hereditary tendency."

But the surest clues to identify Hearn are his frequent use of the semicolon,<sup>1</sup> (a circumstance which earned for him the nickname of "Old Semicolon" among his fellow reporters), and his repetition of favorite and overworked words. The word that takes the prize for being overworked is "ghostly." He found everything "ghostly," even Herbert Spencer. He used the word in the title of a book, *In Ghostly Japan*. There is no case like it of an author overworking a word. It is a sure clue to Hearn. The reader will find the word often in these volumes.

Other favorite words in the "Hearnian dialect" are: "spectral," "phantom," "grotesque," "arabesque," "elfin," "eldritch," "ghoulish," "bizarre," "weird," "ghastly," "fantastic," "lurid," "phosphorescent," "piteous," "hideous," "darksome," "dismal," "swarthy," "rueful," "fabulous," "concoction," "monstrous," "exotic," etc., etc. One or some of these words appearing once or more in a newspaper article that deals with the gruesome, the lowly, the cadaverous, the fanciful, is almost a sure indication of his authorship. When the article in addition, mentions a favorite author like Lytton or Reade, or a favorite artist like Doré or John Martin, we may feel as if Hearn had signed the article with his name.

<sup>1</sup> It may be recalled that Lincoln said he found the semicolon a useful fellow.

I discovered by applying this method many of the articles in these two volumes.

I got the titles of all the articles mentioned or reprinted herein from the *Commercial* by looking through the Sunday issues (and occasionally daily issues which yielded a few important items), for 1876, and the latter half of 1875, at which time I discovered that he went on the paper. I also scanned the issues of 1877 up to October, the time he left for New Orleans.

I came across the article, *Butterfly Fantasies*, in the issue of May 9, 1876. This was a description of a collection of butterflies by one F. W. Dury. I had not the slightest doubt that this magical prose poem was by Hearn, for no one else could have written it. First, there was the subject, his interest in butterflies, about which he wrote in his Japanese period; then his favorite language "elfin beauty," "arabesque design." Quite accidentally I discovered the other article in the same style, called *Frost Fancies*, in the issue for December 10, 1876, occupying about a third of a column; it seemed buried forever beyond possibility of being discovered. When I read of "spectral mosses," "ghost ferns" and the "phantom knights" and noted the strange things into which Hearn's fancy wove the images on a frost covered window, I knew I had discovered another Hearn prose poem. When I re-read the butterfly article I noted the expression "the mysterious chemistry of nature which forms the octagonal crystal or creates frosty dreams of summer woods upon a window-pane." In the *Frost Fancies*, he tells of the forms of vegetation created by the frost. The same pen wrote both sketches and that could have been only Hearn's, who was then on the paper and whose imagination, language and

choice of subject, betray the authorship. In the May article on butterflies, he was already possessed of an idea he developed in the December one on *Frost Fancies*.

I was now on the lookout for Hearn's stories of colored life, and of the longshoreman and their songs. Colonel Cockerill had said Hearn was fascinated by the "negro stevedores on the steamboat landings. He wrote of their songs, their imitations, their uncouth ways, and he found picturesqueness in their rags, poetry in their juba dances." Henderson, the City Editor of the *Commercial*, as quoted by Gould, said Hearn's greatest pleasure was "to study and absorb the indolent sensuous life of the negro race, and to steep them in romance. The distant booming upon the midnight air of a river steamer's whistle was for him the roustabout's call to his waiting mistress at the landing, and his fruitful pen drew the pictures of their watching and coming and meeting" (*Concerning Lafcadio Hearn*). Tunison also wrote in the *Bookbuyer* previously quoted, of Hearn's remarkable studies of life on what in the river towns of the Mississippi Valley is called "the levee."

I discovered in the *Commercial* several of Hearn's important studies of colored life to which Cockerill, Henderson and Tunison refer; I reprint one, *Levee Life* (March 17, 1876). In *Levee Life* Hearn shows he knew the value of jazz music. Here he first started collecting songs of the stevedores as later he was to collect songs of the Creoles and of the Japanese laborers. In his lectures and letters, he explained the importance of such songs. As literature becomes artificial, it needs rejuvenation by an infusion of the simple, vulgar songs of the common people. Hearn's article has some journalistic touches, but I give it entire because of the intimate portrayal of the scenes and characters.

I also found two stories, I reprint, in which negro characters figure.

The stories are *Dolly, an Idyl of the Levee* (August 27, 1876) and *Banjo Jim's Story* (October 1st, 1876). *Dolly* is a pathetic story indeed, the tale of a loose girl's love for a roustabout. There is nothing squeamish or affected about the tale. It foreshadows the Hearn of the Japan period and deals with a favorite theme, the love, devotion and sacrifice of people in humble life.

*Banjo Jim's Story* is one of Hearn's early ghost stories, and there is a remarkable resemblance of a passage in it to one in a later essay *Nightmare Touch* in *Shadowings* (1900). "The long fiddler had not only grown to the ceiling, but was actually growing *along the ceiling*, toward the window, over the door, bending horribly over the crowd below." In *Nightmare Touch* (*Shadowings*, p. 241), Hearn writes, unconsciously drawing on his earlier story: "They were shadowy, dark-colored figures, capable of atrocious and self-distortions—capable, for instance, of growing up to the ceiling and then across it, and then lengthening themselves head-downward along the opposite wall."

I accidentally stumbled on the famous but lost account of Hearn's ascent up the spire of St. Peter's Cathedral. The article was in the *Commercial* for May 26, 1876, and is called *Steeple Climbers*. The greatest part of the article describes his ascent and the fear and danger connected with it. Only a portion of a paragraph in the story makes a brief survey of the part of the city he did see. Thus we dispose of another myth often repeated that Hearn perpetrated a fraud by giving a lengthy account of what he did not see since he was half blind.

Hearn had reminiscences of this ghostly experience later,

for he was thinking of this feat of his when he wrote in the opening paragraph of *In a Cup of Tea* in *Kotto* (1902):

“Have you ever attempted to mount some old tower stairway spiring up through darkness, and in the heart of the darkness, found yourself at the cobwebbed edge of nothing? . . . The emotional worth of such experience—from a literary point of view—is proved by the power of the sensations aroused, and by the vividness with which they are remembered.”

I had no difficulty in identifying the collection of ghost stories in the two articles called *The Restless Dead* and *Some Strange Experience*, both published within a month of each other in the *Commercial*.

*The Restless Dead* contains a conscious or unconscious plagiarism of a line from Lytton's story *The Haunted and the Haunters*, “ghastly exhalations seem to rise from its floor.”

I also attribute, beyond a shadow of a doubt, *Some Pictures of Poverty* (January 7, 1877) to Hearn. The description of the gloomy houses is in his characteristic manner and could have been only by him. We become certain the article is Hearn's when we come later to expressions like “spectral vision,” “phantom visitors” and “elfish mockeries.” And Cockerill also said—“He loved to write of things in humble life. . . . He prowled among the dark corners of the city and from gruesome places, he dug out charming idyllic stories.”

The authorship of the article *A Romantic Episode at the Musical Club* (October 1, 1877), is easily disposed of. Hearn referred to the incident recorded in this article in a letter to Krehbiel, shortly after he left Cincinnati, for New Orleans. He wrote that he had never forgotten the pretty

Chinese melody he heard at the Club and that he sometimes finds himself whistling it involuntarily. He was also delighted that Krehbiel had since got Charles Lee's instruments, *Life and Letters* (vol. I p. 168). Krehbiel himself recalled the episode in an article in the *Critic*, April 1906, *Letters of a Poet to a Musician*, and he quotes a large part of Hearn's story. Krehbiel explained the nature of the strange dedication to him by Hearn of *Some Chinese Ghosts*, which refers to the "serpent-bellied San-Hien" (a banjo) and "the shrieking Ya-Hien" (a violin), on which Krehbiel induced the Chinaman to play.

This disposes of the evidence for the Hearn authorship of the articles I have selected from others I have discovered, and reprinted from the *Commercial*.

What amazed me most about these articles was their surprisingly exceptional literary merit.

### III

As the Sunday issues of the *Enquirer* for 1874 were missing in the Congressional Library, I turned to some of the daily issues. I soon found the important Tanyard Murder story which occupies almost the whole first page of the issue of the paper of Monday, November 9, 1874. The story is entitled *Violent Cremation*.

This story was not a "scoop" but attracted attention because of the gruesome description of the charred corpse and the vivid account of the indenting of the victim with a six-pronged pitch-fork and the thrusting of the body (with life possibly still not extinct) into the burning furnace. There were also drawings by Farny of the murders and a sketch of the remains, drawn as the signature shows, by Hearn. These combined circumstances led to several

editions of the paper, all of which were exhausted. The story was also widely copied.

For many months there were accounts of the progress of the case. The outcome of the trial as told in one of the histories of Cincinnati, was that Andreas Egner's son turned state's evidence, and the elder Egner and George Rufer, received life sentences. Egner was later pardoned by Governor Foster, because of tuberculosis and died a maniac in 1889.

It is singular that though the Tanyard Murder story was Hearn's most famous news story, it has never been reprinted in book form, except for the extract Gould gives "in obedience to a sense of duty." I have reprinted the entire story, because it was characteristic of the writings of the Hearn of those days. His interest in the "growsome" as he liked to spell it, appears also in many of his Japanese tales. Lovers of Hearn have long desired to find this famous newspaper tale accessible; its reprinting will not hurt Hearn's reputation. His friend, Elizabeth Bisland, even suggested my reprinting the tale.

Eager now to locate Hearn's Sunday articles in the *Enquirer* and being unable at the time to go to Cincinnati I asked my friend, Professor Harry N. Slonimsky, connected with the Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, to make a list of all unsigned articles and stories in the Sunday issues of the *Enquirer* for two years—from July 1873 to July 1875. Professor Slonimsky sent me about fifty titles with the dates of issue. I had the articles then photostated.

Many of them, as Professor Slonimsky also perceived, proved to be by Hearn, but I chose only one for publication here, *The Cedar Closet*, March 1, 1874.

*The Cedar Closet* is the earliest story of Hearn's yet dis-

covered. Here are his favorite adverbs and adjectives in phrases like: "I longed piteously," "piteous man," "the lurid<sup>1</sup> gloom of the cloud," "swarthy hues" and "fabulous power." The story shows also the strong influence of Lytton's *The Haunted and the Haunters*, there is a similarity of events, like the being awakened in the room by a female ghost, the secret crime committed, the discovery of a portrait, the reference to old-fashioned clothes worn in another age, etc.

*The Cedar Closet* is well written, and fulfills all the conditions of a ghost story as Hearn later described these to his Japanese students; it also has the tenderness which he believed necessary in ghost stories. Hearn was abnormally interested in ghost stories. As Chamberlain said, no one could understand Hearn who did not take into consideration his belief in ghosts.

In his lecture on the *Supernatural in Fiction*, Hearn gave a good explanation of the importance of ghost stories. Though we do not believe in ghosts, yet science shows all matter is not solid, but ghostly. The universe is a mystery, a ghostly one; all great art reminds us of the universal riddle; all great art has something ghostly in it. "It touches something within us which relates to infinity." The thrill we get from a work of art is akin to that the ancients got when they thought they saw a ghost. The ghostly always represents some shadow of truth. The ghost story has always happened in our dreams and reminds us of forgotten experiences, imaginative and emotional, and hence, thrills us. It has charm because a dream experience is used.

<sup>1</sup> "Lurid" appears also in Hearn's first editorial in *Ye Giggampz* June, 21, 1874. See Gould (p. 38.) See also *Life and Letters*. vol. 1, p. 329 (1884) "lurid facts."



For the dream furnishes us with the qualities of ghostly tenderness literature contains. In visions of the dead we have unselfish affection; everything is gentle.

The other two of the four selections from the *Enquirer* in this volume, I found when I later went to Cincinnati and again went over the *Commercial* and the *Enquirer* for a thorough study of Hearn's newspaper work on those two papers.

The beautiful prose poem *Valentine Vagaries* (February 14, 1875) is quite a contrast to the Tanyard Murder story, written two months earlier. It foreshadows his later interest in old-time customs and folklore, and shows his ever recurring tendency to extract the romantic from the commonplace. Holidays associated with affairs of the heart and poetic customs appealed to him; and he also wrote about Halloween, in the *Enquirer*, November 1, 1874. He later wrote a beautiful account of All Saints for the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, October 31, 1882.

*Giglampz* (October 4, 1874) is a valuable discovery because of its personal allusions. All of Hearn's biographers mention his editorship of the short-lived comic weekly *Ye Giglampz*, but no one seemed to know that he himself had written at length in mock-heroic strain, a complete account of the birth and demise of that now famous journal. Incidentally Hearn's story, divided like a novel into chapters, is the most personal and self-revealing of all his writings. Nothing he has written throws more light on his early literary tendencies than this story. He introduces himself in the third chapter under the name of "The Ghoul." We have now for the first time Hearn's own version of his friendly quarrels with the artist Farny, (whom he here calls deliberately O'Pharney, because Farny hated to see

his name misspelled). We get an insight into Hearn's fine sense of humor, which unfortunately he never allowed to develop. We observe his love of exquisite vocabulary and hatred of Puritanism. His account both from a biographical and a literary point of view of the vicissitudes of the weekly paper, is even more valuable than any of his contributions to it.

I also saw the only copy of the extinct weekly, which Mrs. Farny showed me during my stay in Cincinnati. It was Hearn's own copy and he had put his initials under his contributions. Mr. Farny had picked it up in a second-hand book store. Dr. Gould had borrowed this copy when he wrote about *Giglampz* in his book.

Since it is unnecessary and impossible to reprint all of Hearn's early writings, I thought it advisable to give an account of his work in Cincinnati. A brief résumé of the articles that Hearn wrote, with a few brief extracts, should be an index to his life and art in his mid-twenties, and should also be valuable in helping one understand his future work, as a knowledge of the sources of a man's literary career is always of biographical and critical value. The articles herein reprinted speak for themselves; but it is important, in order to know Hearn, to dwell somewhat on many of his characteristic articles, which I have not reprinted.

I have often wondered what was the subject of the first manuscript which Hearn submitted to Cockerill for the *Enquirer*. Recalling Cockerill's account of how Hearn drew from under his coat his manuscript and tremblingly laid it on the table and how he stole away like a distorted brownie, I really became eager to discover this article, (for it was printed,) as Cockerill found it "charmingly written in the

purest and strongest English, and full of ideas that were bright and forceful.”

The only thing to do, was to go through the Sunday issues of the *Enquirer* before the year 1874, when Hearn was already a regular reporter, and to note when there ceased appearing articles that were indubitably from his pen.

The last half of the year 1873 showed a number of Sunday articles written by Hearn, but the first half of the year was almost deficient in Sunday articles. I came across an article in the issue of January 12, 1873, called *Mortuary Literature*. Though this article had no semicolons, I saw immediately it was Hearn's. It was from the pen of the same hand that wrote the article on a similar subject twenty-five years later in the essay *The Literature of the Dead*, in *Exotics and Retrospectives*. He also uses the phrase “mortuary literature” in this essay.

This brief quotation is characteristic and betrays the Hearn authorship:

“It is probable that a keen-eyed and philosophical observer could give the direction and the measure of the natural thought and life of any people, if indeed, he could not construe its history from an observation of its tombs as accurately as the anatomist from a metacarpus can construe a skeleton. . . . The epitaph, therefore, if it is believed to lie specifically, is generally an unimpeachable truth-teller.”

Was however the article on *Mortuary Literature* Hearn's first contribution to the *Enquirer*? On taking down the volumes for 1872, I found an article on the *Idyls of the King*, in two parts, in the issues of November 24 and December 1, 1872. Knowing Hearn's great admiration for this work, and noting the abundant use of semicolons, the

references to Tennyson's obsolete vocabulary, the introduction of favorite French words like *vraisemblance* and *mal-à-propos*, and observing the excellence of style of the whole article, I was sure of Hearn's authorship. In a lecture in Japan Hearn stated that as a boy he had learned more English from Tennyson than he ever learned in any other way (*Appreciations of Poetry*, p. 35).

I kept on going through the Sunday issues of the paper for 1872; I found no more Sunday articles. I had apparently discovered the first article Hearn submitted to Cockerill. The essay is the earliest ever discovered, printed by Hearn; and it is the progenitor of the long line of literary editorials, book-reviews, and lectures on literature, subsequently written by him.

As the plan of this work does not call for the inclusion of literary criticism, and as the article is too long, I have not included it in this volume. The essay was written on the occasion of Tennyson's issuing one of the last of the *Idyls of the King, Gareth and Lynette*. Hearn thought it a pity Tennyson ever wrote this story; that it was thinner and more fantastic than the other *Idyls*, and in this view many modern critics agree with the young Hearn. He regarded the *Idyls*, however, as being to England what the *Iliad* is to Greece. He dwells on the gentle touch of sadness in the work, due to the striving after perfection and the impossible; he specially commends Tennyson for not dwelling on scenes of bloodshed and horror: he notes Tennyson's easy style, and praises him for not using superfluous words to fill out the measure.

He tells over facts of the story in his own language with many quotations.

The articles on the *Idyls of the King* and *Mortuary Literature* are then the earliest two articles written by Hearn for the *Enquirer*.

Cockerill tells us that in time Hearn was taken on the regular staff. What month this was is not exactly clear. In one of the newspaper stories *Skulls and Skeletons*, (August 30, 1874) Hearn speaks of a "reportorial career of several years." This was an exaggeration, for in a letter written in Japan describing Cockerill's visit to him, Hearn says he began daily work on the *Enquirer* in 1874.

He had however become a regular contributor to the Sunday issues of the *Enquirer* since July 1873. It is evident that the intrinsic quality of Hearn's two earlier articles above mentioned made Cockerill change the policy of the paper to include features in the Sunday issues. Of the articles Hearn contributed for the last half of the year 1873, about half a dozen, however, stand out as worthy of notice.

The most Hearnian of these is a story in the form of an editorial called *Wonders of Assassinations*, December 14, and recounting one of the oddest means of committing murder ever recorded. It is the story of a one-legged German, who reading Malthus concluded there were too many people in the world and resolved to exterminate some. He converted his wooden leg into a fire-arm, and fastened to the concealed trigger a string, of which the other end was in his pocket. After several murders, he was apprehended and sentenced. At the execution, he made an effort to assassinate the executioner with his wooden leg, but exploded it and himself into fragments, for the muzzle of the wooden leg had been choked with sand and gravel.

The editorial was inspired by the "grotesque audacity" of a letter of a *Retired Murderer* to the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Hearn also quotes his favorite DeQuincey's *Murder as a Fine Art*.

During this period he did a few book-reviews, summarized the current magazines and had a few other articles issued as editorials. On November 2, 1873, he wrote a review of *Marjorie Daw* by Thomas Bailey Aldrich, of whom he was then a great admirer. In his review, Hearn quotes from Aldrich's story about Father Antoine's Date Palm, which he later sought in New Orleans, and about which he wrote in one of his Ozias Midwinter Letters. Hearn's praise of Aldrich's book is extravagant. In the same issue there is also an editorial by him, *Ancient and Modern British Amusement*, against practical jokes.<sup>1</sup> His familiarity with old English customs appears in this editorial and he quotes Timb's history of Club Life in London.

On December 21, 1873, a summary of the leading magazines for January 1874 is notable for its singling out a story by Henry James, *The Last of the Valerii*, for special approbation. At this time James was not wellknown and no book by him had yet appeared<sup>2</sup> (James's first book, *A Passionate Pilgrim*, 1875, contains this story.)

On December 28th, Hearn had an editorial *Caste*; this is the first of his writings on Hindoo subjects.

But it was Hearn's special local stories which predominated in the *Enquirer* during the last half of 1873.

There is a remarkable, vivid and detailed account of the

<sup>1</sup> In the *Item* for December 28, 1880, he had an editorial on *Practical Jokers*.

<sup>2</sup> In an editorial, *Decline of the Atlantic*, in the *Item*, for November 4, 1878, Hearn contrasts the Magazine of that period with the issue which contains James's story, above referred to.

arrest of a rowdy, whom his friends were bent on rescuing from the police: *Almost a Riot* (August 24). This story of a Saturday night stirring up of the slums would make an effective chapter in a novel; the account is so real and inclusive; Hearn touched on every phase of the disturbance. Any one who has seen policemen struggle with a prisoner in an unfriendly crowd, would attest to the truthfulness of Hearn's portrayal.

In the issue of August 10, a curious story is told, of John Algernon Owen, a lawyer, soldier, and author, who defrauded his landlady of his board-bill, and his lady canvassers of the commissions for selling his biography *Sword and Pen*, published under the name of Willard Glazier. Hearn selects the opening paragraph for quotation, and it is a good quotation, but he calls the book three hundred and fifty pages of rubbish.

He also wrote an interesting article of the Jews giving a sympathetic account of their history and customs, *The Hebrews of Cincinnati* (November 9, 1873). He later returned to the subject in his story of Dr. Wise's Seminary, *The Hebrew College, Commercial* (September 19, 1875).<sup>1</sup>

As early as July 27, 1873, in *A Nasty Nest*, Hearn showed his interest in writing about the haunts of crime and poverty, in descriptions of which he was proficient and to which he often recurred. The story as he says in the subtitle, deals with "a nameless alley and its nameless crimes."

But it was beginning with the year 1874, that his work for the *Enquirer* assumed more varied aspects. In January of that year, he made a crusade against spiritualists and mediums, and every Sunday of that month

<sup>1</sup> In New Orleans, while on the *Item* and the *Times-Democrat*, he wrote on numerous topics of Jewish interest.

he had an interview with some one or other of them. The first of his articles was an interview with the spiritualist author Napoleon Bonaparte Wolfe, whose book *Startling Facts of Modern Spiritualism*, he had recently reviewed. I found five lengthy interviews with spiritualists, as follows: *Modern Spiritualism* (January 4); *Occult Science* (January 11); *Unwilling Spirits* (January 18); *Among the Spirits* (January 25); and *The Mysterious Man* (February 15).

Hearn reported the conversations he held with the seeresses, and described their humbug seances. The article of most interest to us, however, is the fourth one where he reports a conversation he held with his dead father.

This article, *Among the Spirits*, is a very personal one. He was usually reticent in his published works about private matters, but in this interview he gives us some of his family history. First, Hearn tells the medium he had no knowledge of spiritual influence except from reading Lytton's fantastic tales, and he quotes the line "ghastly exhalations rising through the floor," from *The Haunted and the Haunters*, that tale he quotes so often in his newspaper articles. He tells the seeress, the description is "vague but awful." (He used this line almost verbatim later in *The Restless Dead*, the *Commercial* (August 29, 1875)—"ghastly exhalations seem to rise from its floor.")

Hearn addresses the ghost, his father, and asks his name. The reply is—"Charles Bush H——." Only the first two names are printed in full, but H—— of course stands for Hearn. Hearn was amazed, for the middle name as he says, was a curious one; but what is even more remarkable, the



spirit addresses him by one of his own middle names, by which however he was unknown in America to his friends, "P——" (i. e. Patrick). The father then begged for forgiveness. Hearn says the plea alluded to a private matter of family history. As we know, it referred to Dr. Charles Bush Hearn's desertion of his Greek wife, Hearn's mother. Hearn tells us in the article that his father was buried in the Mediterranean in 1866, and had spent the greater part of his life in Hindoostan, and that neither of the parties, (i. e. his father or mother), had any relatives in America. Nina Kennard says in her biography of Hearn that Major Charles Bush Hearn was stationed many years in India, died November 27, 1866, at Suez, on an English steamship.

Hearn was simply dumfounded; he had come to mock. He gave to the reader an account of the séance, as it happened. He could not explain how the medium acquired her knowledge. (Possibly the medium who had been exposed before by Hearn made up her mind to "get him," and she learned something about Hearn from Mr. Cullinane to whom Hearn had been consigned by his relatives.)

An autobiographical passage from another article, *Unwilling Spirits* (January 18, 1874), is worth citing:

"The reporter had once been a Spiritualist when he was very young. That is—he used to believe in ghosts. He can yet remember a great, gloomy house where his youthful days were spent, whose walls were hung with dim looking portraits of deceased ancestors, dressed in quaint fashions long since dead, as those who wore them, and where the rooms were filled with massive old-fashioned furniture ornamented with grotesque carving. He used to think that house was peopled with goblins. Hideous faces

seemed to peep at him from behind the window curtains, and nightmare shapes to crouch in all the dark corners, and ghostly footfalls to echo upon the stairs and shadowy hands to clutch at him when he went up to bed of dark evenings. He remembers how awfully afraid he used to be in the dark and how he would put his head under the bedclothes, and howl in an agony of fear. But he remembers how somebody who heard him yelling one night came into the room with a candle in one hand, and a strap in the other, and how well, how a very unpleasant combination of circumstances compelled him to change his opinions concerning ghosts and ghostness and from that eventful night he ceased to hold heterodox sentiments upon the subject of ghostology."

In the article *Occult Science*, Hearn also had a few personal touches referring to himself as "an unusually small man," single, and he calls himself a foreigner, coming from a country where "black people" (negroes) "are scarcely seen," i. e. Great Britain. He refers to his "dirty shirt, his poverty, and his lack of acquaintances with any ladies except his landlady." He also indulges in his favorite word "ghostly" in two of these articles in *Modern Spiritualism*, and *Unwilling Spirits*, and in the latter mentions his favorite novel of Lytton, *A Strange Story*.

To summarize all the articles that appeared from his pen in the *Enquirer* for the next year and a half, would occupy too much space, but references to some of the characteristic ones with a few extracts, will further reveal much that is new about Hearn, and will contribute an unknown chapter to his literary life.

Take the article *Les Chiffoniers*, July 26, 1874, where he visits the dump and describes the rag-pickers there. He was not successful in getting them into conversation with him, but did extract a brief history of some of them from the

rag-dealers. His description of the dump itself is worth quoting:

“It is not a locality which people often visit, save when compelled by circumstances over which they have no control; and those who have once beheld never wish to behold it again. A wilderness of filthy desolation walled in by dismal factories; a Golgotha of foul bones and refuse; a great grave-yard for worn-out pots and kettles and smashed glasses, and rotten vegetables and animal filth, and shattered household utensils and abominations unutterable. The broken ground glitters with tin shreds and scrapings; the sunlight falls luridly on the fetid dump-piles through the noisome veil of thick smoke that hangs over all; and other sounds are deadened by the dull, never-ceasing roar of the machines in the huge factories on either hand. Here and there evil-featured women, children and hideous old men may be seen toiling and burrowing amid the noisome piles of rottenness—beings frightful as gnomes, realizing the grotesquely horrible fantasies of some modern French writers. Victor Hugo must have visited The Dumps ere writing that nightmare tale, *The Dwarf of Notre Dame*. Clad in rags fouler than those they unearthed from the decaying filth beneath them, the dump-pickers worked silently side by side, with a noiseless swiftness that seemed goblin-like to one coming upon such a scene for the first time. At a greater distance these miserable creatures, crawling over the dumps on all-fours, looked in their ash-colored garments, like those insects born of decay, which take the hue of the material they feed upon.

“The reporter clambered over the debris, and addressed the toilers one by one. Old men, begrimed to hideousness with filth and feeble with disease, glared weirdly and wildly upon him for a moment, and returned to their foul labor, without replying to his query. Children, gaunt, hungry, dirty—children that had never had a childhood, looked upon him in a piteously dazed, confused manner, with great dull eyes, and stammered incoherent replies to his inquiries.”

Rag-pickers seemed to appeal to Hearn, and he even translated for the *Times-Democrat*, an article by J. R. Riri, mentioned in Gould's list of translations.

One of Hearn's crowning achievements as a descriptive writer for the *Enquirer* was of an artist's nude model. He first gave a fine description of the studio and then the verbal picture of the model herself. It forms the conclusion of the article which he calls *Beauty Undraped* (October 18, 1874), with a sub-title—*What a Wicked Reporter Saw in an Artist's Studio*. The beauty of the description will excuse its length:

"She lay at full length upon a long sofa, unclad and unadorned save by the matchless gifts of nature, her white limbs lightly crossed, both hands clasped over her graceful little head, and her luxurious blonde hair streaming, loose beneath her in a river of tawny gold. As the lounge had been placed with its back to the door, the approach of the visitor had not been perceived. But for the burning blush that dyed her face and throat crimson at the moment of rencounter, and the scarcely perceptible heaving of her snowy bosom, she might have been taken for a waxen model of the Paphian Aphrodite. She was unusually tall—taller even than most men—yet as exquisitely proportioned as an Oriental dancing-girl. The complexion of her limbs and body was something marvelous in color—a pearly opaline, that no brush could mimic on canvas. It had the sheen and smoothness of polished marble, yet seemed to glow as if the blue veins that gleamed through its delicate transparency 'ran lightning.' Her limbs were marvelously round, and on the under side flushed, daintily pink, like the heart of a sea-shell, yet formed so as to convey the sense of strength combined with grace; and her throat and shoulders and bosom were a living realization of that matchless symmetry admired by the world in the marble of Greek Art for more than a thousand years. Her features are frankly pleasing and strongly charac-

teristic—eyes large, dark and brilliant rather than soft; mouth firm but good-natured, and cheeks rosy with health. But what journalistic pen could do aught like justice to beauties that recalled the descriptive poesy of the grandest of all erotic songs, the Song which is Solomon's!

“The model herself is a mystery to all our artists. None know whence she comes or whither she goes, and none dare pry into her little secrets. She never comes by appointment, being often absent for weeks; and her visits have been, in more senses than one, like unto angel's visits. Let her remain a beautiful mystery still to the inquisitive world, which is graced by her lovely presence.

“Gradually the light without changed from glowing gold to burning carmine, and finally faded into gloaming gray; the grotesque shadows of the quaint studio deepened and lengthened and at last blended together in dusky gloom; the lurid coal-fire in the open stove grew dimmer and died out in ashes; and the wearied artists laid aside their brushes. The reporter, who had long since sunk, overwhelmed into an easy chair, slowly puffed a cigar, muttering to himself the lines—

‘With dreamful eyes  
My spirit lies  
Under the walls of Paradise.’

“The beautiful shape on the sofa arose, modestly wrapped itself in a great gray blanket and retired from the scene into an adjoining room.

“Then followed the rustle of silk, the sound of the adjustment of mysterious feminine attire, the tread of elastic feet upon the floor, and the noise of a gentle hand upon the door-handle. Upon our ears fell the kindly words, ‘Good-night,’ in a sweetly musical voice, deep and clear as a silver bell. Then the door closed with a little clap, and the studio became lonely—oh, so lonely!”

I should very much like to have reprinted an excellent study of Lucille Western, the actress as Nancy Sikes,

*Nancy Sikes*, (April 11, 1875.) He dwells on her freedom from sentimentalism, her naturalness, her truthfulness to type. The article is a fine piece of dramatic criticism, and Hearn opens it with a tribute to Dickens and concludes that the theater is a mighty moral agent, for this play evokes "the pity that is akin to love, the sorrow that awakens unwholesome resolves."

Then there is a satirical essay *Patronage* (May 17, 1875), which also deserves to be reprinted. Hearn says that when one who holds the same social position as the Genius and encourages him, we call it sympathy, but if one does it who has "a circulating medium styled money" we call it patronage. "Patronage began with Adam." The patronage by the state in the Renaissance period led to free-thinking and independence not contemplated by the state. The best patronage is private patronage, except when, as in our country, there are too many geniuses and too many wealthy men. Hearn waxes ironical about the patronizing manner with which Cincinnati accepts such independent musicians like Handel, Rossini, Liszt and Mendelssohn. He concludes by suggesting to patrons to read Æsop's Fable of the gnat who begged a bull's pardon for incommoding him by his weight while sitting on his horn. Hearn tells another tale of a peasant who told his friends the king had spoken to him, telling him, to get out of the way. Hearn ventures a guess that these composers would have told their Cincinnati patrons the same thing.

Another favorite subject of Hearn's is cremation, and he had of course an article on it, *Shall We Burn or Bury?*, (March 1, 1874). He dwells on the unsanitary conditions of modern burial and indulges in a cadaverous and imagina-

tive description of a corpse, decomposing under the ground.

Hearn also interviewed an undertaker and got his views in favor of cremation, *Cremation* (April 19, 1874.) Incidentally, it may be added that in a New Orleans editorial later Hearn prophesied that electricity would be the most effective method for accomplishing this purpose.

The work he did on the *Enquirer* was as variegated as it was odd. In *Skulls and Skeletons* (*Enquirer*, August 30, 1874), Hearn himself tells us the nature of some of the subjects he wrote about:

“During a reportorial career of several years we have indeed met with many odd people—ghouls long practiced in tomb-bursting, professional traffickers in the flesh of dead men; dealers in second-hand gravestones, stolen by night from old cemeteries; professional mourners and professional epitaph writers; but a professional articulator of skeletons was something novel to our experience.”

He went to a rural religious meeting and gave a vivid account of the peculiar sights and performances, *Camp Santo* (September 13, 1874); he took a trip to the cemetery and wrote a fine article on the tombstones, *Tombstones* (November 1, 1874). He anticipated Upton Sinclair in *The Quarter of Shambles* (November 15, 1874). He took a ride to Potters Field and wrote up how the sexton-guardian was in alliance with ghouls to steal corpses for the dissecting-room,<sup>1</sup> *Golgotha* (November 29, 1874); he visited a dissecting room and gave a picture of it to the public,

<sup>1</sup> He wrote an editorial on *Body Snatching* for the *Item*, November 24, 1878, and quotes two lines he cites in the above mentioned article:

“Rattle his bones over the stones,  
He’s only a pauper whom nobody owns.”

*The Dance of Death* (May 3, 1874); he described the horrors suffered and cruelties perpetrated in lunatic asylums, *Mad-House Horrors* (January 10, 1875), *Mad-House Scenes* (February 14, 1875). His gruesome interests were generally coupled with humanitarianism purposes.

He told of various occupations, the work of chambermaids, laundry workers, newspaper-carriers, (October 25, 1874), (March 14, 1875) (September 27, 1874).

He had his say about numismatics (October 11, 1874).

He of course dwelt on the life of the colored people, telling the story of a colored barber who had bought his freedom from slavery, *Mr. Handy's Life* (January 25, 1874), writing up a colored man's restaurant, *Butler's* (November 22, 1874), as well as the proprietor of the tavern Hearn mentions often in his stories of colored life, *The Man Pickett* (February 21, 1875).

He also wrote about the colored girls and about an exclusive organization of mulattoes, *Swarthy Beauty* (August 9, 1874); *Blue Blood* (August 17, 1874).

He exposed boss barbers who tried to keep down journeyman's wages, *Barbarous Barbers* (March '8, 1874), as well as clothing manufacturers who underpaid their help, *Slow Starvation* (February 15, 1874); and he gave an account of a number of murderers who escaped the full penalty of the law, *Escaped Murderers* (January 3, 1875).

He was courageous in exposing injustice and he anticipated many investigations undertaken by modern reformers; for example, he was interested in writing about the adulteration of foods and drinks.

Hearn also got the stories of pickpockets and counterfeits from their own mouths; he visited the midnight missions and the city infirmary.



In one article he wrote biographical accounts of Cincinnati's leading clergymen, the lengthiest and best picture being that of the famous Rabbi Max Lilienthal, *Cincinnati Saints* (October 11, 1874); and he drew "pen photographs" of some of the police captains and lieutenants, *Blue and Brass* (April 11, 1875).

Hearn sometimes would introduce a commonplace newspaper article by some philosophical reflection. His article, *A Fireman's Museum* (January 18, 1874), begins with a paragraph showing his early interest in archæology. He states that a collection for a period of time of man's weapons in the physical battle of life, indicates the progress of that world in that period. Another article, *Cincinnati Salamanders* (December 27, 1874), dealing with the various fire companies, begins with a fine discourse on the manner in which vocations diversify character, securing to the world, unity in variety and redeeming it from monotony.

He interviewed Farny and two other artists, *Our Artists* (March 22, 1874). He also spent an hour with the actor James E. Murdock at his home, and wrote up an account of him gleaned from the papers Murdock showed Hearn, *Hempstead* (May 30, 1875).

There are many other stories by Hearn in the *Enquirer* I have passed by, though they seem to be his, but I have confined myself to a few whose authorship is beyond doubt. Nearly all the articles I refer to have the numerous semicolons that earned him his famous sobriquet of "Old Semicolon."

#### IV

In spite of the fact that I have reprinted fourteen articles from the *Commercial*, a brief summary also of those I have

not reprinted will prove of interest. Hearn often wrote on the *Commercial* on the same topics upon which he had touched on the *Enquirer*.

Hearn's newspaper articles show that he went on the *Commercial* in the summer of 1875. He was dismissed from the *Enquirer* for wanting to marry a mulatto. The *Enquirer* tried to get him back at a larger salary than he was getting on the *Commercial*, but he refused to return.

The *Commercial* gave him as full liberty in the choice of subjects as did the *Enquirer* and he indulged his fancy. What other writer, for instance, but Hearn, would take as a subject for an article such as an odorous a place as a Fertilizer Establishment—a "stink factory?" What reporter would go through the place and describe in detail the boiling of the carcasses and offend his readers' olfactories with accounts of the smells? Yet that is what Hearn did in an article called *Balm of Gilead*, *Commercial* (October 31, 1875), the title being the humorous designation of the railroad station near the fertilizing plant. Hearn wrote the article, as he says, to answer curious questions of the public as to what makes such a stink and what becomes of dead animals? Some of his information is really interesting—how pure tallow, grease, lard and soap are obtained; why the smell in the factory is not as bad as that at some distance away from it; (because the latter is a compound stench); etc. Hearn tells us also how he saw the men at lunch in one of the filthiest and foulest smelling rooms, where the intestines are scraped for sausage skins, and he comments upon the fact that people get used to their occupations. Hearn as a composer of a symphony of smells anticipated Zola, whom he nevertheless execrated; it is very

curious that Hearn of all men, should later in the *Item*, in a review of a book by Zola, complain of the odor of sewerage and putrescence in Zola's work.

Among Hearn's work on the *Commercial*, worth reprinting is his introductory account of the history of auctions and of the romance and sadness connected with public sales of furniture; *Notes in an Auction Room* (December 5, 1875).

The major portion of the article is an account of a book auction. Hearn mentions some radical books which throw light on his reading. He was in those days a free-thinker, and found in his friend Watkin, a sympathetic companion in religious discussion. He mentions "J. B. Mendum, proprietor of the *Boston Investigator*, the organ of free thought, and the publisher or importer of such infidel works as the *Life of Thomas Paine*, the *Age of Reason*, *Common Sense*, Volney's *Ruins*, *Vestiges of Creation*, Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary*, *Self-Contradiction of the Bible*, Combe's *Constitution of Man*, the *Confessions* of Rousseau, the *Writings* of Theodore Parker, Prideaux's *Quaestiones Mosaicae*, and a vast variety of pamphlets, scientific, materialistic, theistic and atheistic."

He also mentions the fact that some Eastern firm monopolizes the importation of the splendid English editions of Milton, Dante, the *Bible*, *Don Quixote*, the *Legend of Croquemitaine*, the *Doré Gallery*, *Atala*, *René*, *Guinevere*, *Vivian*, *Elaine*, the *Wandering Jew*, and other illustrated works of Gustave Doré.

The following passage in the article is also interesting:

"Once we picked up a curious collection of fantastic stories, including Griffin's *Rock of the Candle*, Poe's *Monos and Daimonos*,

the weird tale of *Der Freischutz*, and a dozen other imaginative creations which deserve high rank in the English classic fiction—it cost us just one fourth of a cent.”

The allusion to *Monos and Diamonos* requires some comment. In his lectures to his students, *Interpretation of Literature* (vol. I, p. 242), he says that as a boy he read it, in a magazine. The story was not signed and he thought for many years Poe wrote it. In fact, he mentions it as Poe's in the article on nightmares I reprint from *The Item*, and in *A Mad Romantic* (Gerard de Nerval), *Times-Democrat* (February 24, 1884), collected in *Essays in European and Oriental Literature*. Later, as he told his students, he learned Bulwer Lytton had written it; it appeared in 1835 in the volume *The Student*, a volume incidentally Poe was fond of.<sup>1</sup> Hearn makes the far-fetched statement in his lecture that his tale “indirectly influenced the literature of half of the English world” because Poe read it while “very young,” and that all his prose was written in imitation of it, and influenced English and other literature.<sup>2</sup> We see however, how much both Poe and Lytton influenced Hearn.

A fine scientific essay is his account of the Mound-builders; this article is inserted in a local story describing various objects being collected for the Centennial, *Cincinnati Archæologists* (April 24, 1876). A very able article is *Halcedama* (September 5, 1875), the best of his slaughter-house stories. He describes the cruelty of the

<sup>1</sup> Poe mentions this tale in a Review of *Rienzi* in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, February 1836, reprinted in Volume VIII, p. 222, of the Virginia edition of his collected works.

<sup>2</sup> Poe however, had already written a few of his good stories before he read Bulwer Lytton's tale.

gentile slaughter-house and gives an excellent and accurate account of the methods of the Jewish Shochet, and he also tells of his experiment for the benefit of his readers in drinking blood, with the consumptives.<sup>1</sup>

Other typical Hearn products worth reprinting are his study *Parish Peoples* (August 22, 1875) and his account of negro minstrels *Black Varieties*, April 9, 1876. It is apparent from the titles above that varied and curious topics fascinated Hearn. He was equally interested in the ancient moundbuilders, slaughter-houses, and the "submerged tenth."

The reason Hearn's books on Japan differ from those of all other travellers is that he wrote in Japan about the very odd topics that occupied him in America, and he carried to Japan the same exotic artistic temperament and psychological outfit, that he invoked in his choice of literary subjects in America.

His curiosity and appetite for knowledge were insatiable, and anything odd and curious aroused his interest. On one occasion he interviews a leech-doctor and gleans the strange particulars about this peculiar profession, *The Leech* (January 9, 1876). At another time, he gets the story of a slave woman's sufferings, her kidnaping and illegal sale, April 2, 1876. He would revert several times to the same odd subjects, *Bones* (January 16, 1876); the *City Dumps* (May 6, 1877); or, *A Slaughter House Story* (July 26, 1876). When the occasion called he would return to the method of the Tanyard Murder story, as in such local news stories, *A Lone Woman Found Dead in Her House* (April 14, 1876), or of a man's butchery of his wife in *Horror on Alison Street* (August 29, 1876).

<sup>1</sup> This description started the legend that Hearn used to drink blood.

Many of these articles have no literary value, but they all show his mental make-up.

In a lengthy article on *Spirit Photography* (November 14, 1875), Hearn exposed the various methods resorted to by fake photographers in producing pictures of spirits. First he gives a complete account of how an ordinary photograph is made—a most remarkable achievement for a layman, because of the technical knowledge displayed. He describes in detail several methods employed in producing alleged photographs of spirits, methods that are no doubt still practiced to-day. Where and how Hearn learned these tricks is mystifying.

The article brought out a letter of protest which appeared in the paper November 21. The writer of the article is referred to as the "reporter with his one eye," and complaint is made that he said that he did not care to sit, that he did not go into the room and had no investigation whatsoever, and sarcastic reference is made to the fact that he had said he was hoping for and expected annihilation at death.

Apparently Hearn neither believed in spirits nor in personal immortality.

Hearn also went to the rag shops and iron mills and wrote about them. His romantic fancy led him to imagine that all the Oriental rags and garments came to Cincinnati and he gives an interesting catalogue of them. He speculates that the very paper he writes on may have portions of the dress of Madame Recamier, and assumes that the dresses of nuns and demi-monde queens may be mingling among the rags. The most artistic passage in the article, *Rags, Iron, Stoves* (January 23, 1875), is his description of the melting of old iron, reminding one of Maupassant's later account of

the Creusot Iron-Works in his book *In the Sunlight*—a chapter translated by Hearn years afterwards for the *Times-Democrat*:

“All the old scrap when brought to the rolling mill, is again sorted, cut up if necessary, and reconverted into all varieties of manufactured iron known to the trade. Our old stoves are broken up, and their fragments mingled with a superior quality of iron, to give firmness and strength to the new product. All the old scraps conceivable are subjected to a process most awful to look upon. The ancient iron is cast into furnaces, whose flames would cast a shadow against the light of Nebuchadnezzar’s famous fire; brought out in ponderous lumps, glowing with the fierce whiteness of an electric light, pounded by cyclopean steam-hammers, whose blows are followed by fountain spurts of fire; and finally crushed by the jaws of the rollers into fantastic shapes. From out those jaws the subtle iron then writhes in serpent form twining and undulating with snakish grace; but only to be sucked back again, and again spat forth in elongated form, until the transformation is completed; while the very ground shudders to the throbbing of the monstrous machines, squeezing, crushing, crashing their flaming food. But the old metal comes out from the cauldron renovated, whole, purified, just as the wizard of old regained his youth by awful sorcery. Wrought iron returns to wrought iron, old steel to new steel, old merchant iron to new merchant iron.”

He also went, accompanied by two policemen, to a Chinese laundry to see a Chinaman smoke opium. He describes the mechanism of the pipe and the process of preparing the opium and smoking it. His usual powers of observation are displayed in the description. It concludes an otherwise prosaic article called *The Opium Habit*, (January 2, 1876). Hearn in this article, as well as in one

on the *Enquirer*,<sup>1</sup> and others in the *New Orleans Item*,<sup>2</sup> foresaw how the dreaded drug was making insidious inroads upon the community. He was one of the pioneers of our present law to suppress the use of opium; and yet malicious gossip has it that he was a user of the drug.

Occasionally he analyzed at great length some curious book. For example, he gave an able and valuable exposition (December 26, 1875), of a curious volume by an Englishman, George Vasey, *The Philosophy of Laughter and Smiling*. The theme of this book was that laughter was not an original instinct, but was unnatural, and flourished only where vice abounded, and was especially dangerous for children. Hearn called his article *Laughter Physically Injurious and Morally Degrading*. The subject of laughter would naturally fascinate Hearn, who later wrote about the *Japanese Smile* in his *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*. There was also in his book review a comment to which he later recurred in his lecture on *Society Verse in Interpretation of Literature* (vol. I, pp. 288-290), namely that people of aristocratic birth keep their emotions under control in public. Though Hearn ironically suggested that Vasey be commemorated by the monument of an owl, one feels Hearn partly agrees with him. Hearn himself hated the laughter that springs from playing practical jokes. He rarely was humorous in his writings. In New Orleans he quoted a summary from Vasey's book in conclusion of an editorial for the *Item*, *No Laughing Matter* (December 16, 1878).

Two weeks after his article on laughter appeared, he had another lengthy article about another curious book, Fanny

<sup>1</sup> *Opium and Morphia* (March 14, 1875).

<sup>2</sup> *Opium Eating* (September 15, 1878); *Opium Dens* (October 5, 1880).



Lear's *Le Roman d'une Americaine en Russie*. Hearn retold in English the story of this volume which had just been published in French. The adventuress told of her affair with the Grand Duke Nicholas Constantinovitch, nephew of the Czar. She had induced the Grand Duke to steal his mother's jewels for her. She was finally banished. She was a Philadelphian, daughter of a clergyman; her real name was Harriet Blackford. Hearn later referred to her in one of his foreign notes for the *Democrat* (July 14, 1880). Both of these articles by Hearn deserve reprinting.

Hearn's wonderful descriptive powers appear at best in an article where he describes a picture that was thought to be a genuine Murillo. In the *Commercial* for December 31, 1875, he wrote an article entitled, *Have we a Genuine Murillo among us?* This article related to a picture purchased at auction in Cincinnati. On January 9, 1876, he gave an account of an interview with an artist, Mr. Aubrey, whose opinion was that the picture was genuine. Aubrey gave no reason for his opinion, but merely said he felt the work was a real Murillo. Hearn had a little discussion on art with him. Hearn claimed that there was no feeling which could not be verbally expressed and he quoted Poe; he also stated that he read art criticisms in which the style of an artist—his peculiar characteristics as an artist—were technically described. Whatever was the final verdict on that picture, Hearn's description is a masterpiece, not surpassed even by many of Ruskin's descriptions.

The description is as follows:

"There is every reason to believe that the subject represents St. Anne with the infant Virgin, attended by administering angels.

The painter appears to have taken for the model of his St. Anne a middle-aged Spanish woman of the poorer class. There is nothing of ideality in this figure; it is wonderfully human—human in the coarse hands, embrowned and rendered rugged by labor; in the swarthy, olive complexion of face and neck; in the dark, straight hair, whereof a thin lock struggles from beneath the head-dress and falls on the sinewy neck; in the long, large, almond-shaped eye, peculiar to the women of Andalusia; in the strong outline of the long, yet pleasing face, and above all in the *vraisemblance* of the poor attire wherewith the figure is clothed. The figure of the child is decidedly ideal; the light hair with a bright dash of gold in its flow; the liquidly dark eyes, the cherub mouth, with its soft dimpling at either corner; and the delicate oval of the whole face, faintly flushed with the daintiest peach-pink—all blend into a beauty altogether ideal. The artist has sought in the infant figure to express the idea of superhuman beauty, the beauty of divinity, and his creation is worthy of the conception. This face is the masterpiece of this masterpiece, so to speak; it is the object which first claims the attention of the visitor to the painting, and detains his gaze. The child, too, forms the central figure of the group—sitting on the lap of St. Anne, who occupies the extreme left of the foreground, her right hand touching the shoulder of the infant, whom she at the same time embraces with the left. The child reclines slightly toward the mother's right in sitting, so that the left foot naturally hangs lower than the right; and this left foot is placed upon the head of a green and speckled serpent. Both mother and child are represented in 'holy ecstasy'—the mother with that devotional smile so expressive of confiding faith, which Murillo, as the great painter of religious enthusiasm, painted as no other man ever did. The child's face is uplifted, and her hands joined as she watches a rift in the clouds where a cherub-face appears, surrounded by a golden glow. Both mother and child are clad in blue and white, colors preferred by Murillo, we are told, for the drapery of the figures in his Conceptions, and Assumptions. A very peculiar and

admirable effect of foreshortening is visible in the right foot of the girl-madonna, and also in the presentation of the left arm, just below where the hands clasp. No ordinary painter could have produced such effects as these. The background of the painting represents a patch of peculiar blue sky, on the right blending into the rifted, gold-tinged clouds where the vision appears, and concealed on the left by an immense mass of foliage, which throws out the well-lighted figures of the group into strong relief. The foreground on the right of the group is a mass of deep brown and green shadow, against which the snake shows a more vivid green; on the extreme left is a fluted column, against which St. Anne appears to lean in sitting. The light comes from the left in a strong, warm glow, bringing out the finest shades of light color in the attire and the flowers worn by the mother and child; touching the hair of the infant with golden light; floating in the uplifted eyes; deepening the rosiness of the flesh tints wherever it touches a cheek, a hand or a foot, and casting over the base of the mother's drapery a warm shadow from the extended wing of a well girded cherub, who, seemingly with his back to the sun, is flying toward the infant child, bearing a wreath of roses."

This is a specimen of the kind of artistic work an obscure half-blind reporter was doing as part of his daily task on a newspaper in a mid-western town of the 'seventies.

The year 1877 must have been a trying year for Hearn. He was working fourteen hours a day; he had lost interest in the drudging he was compelled to do; he hated the Cincinnati climate and environment; he was in a sense isolated from society because of his affair with the mulatto Althea Foley.

There is hardly a special article of note in the paper by him for that year, except the able account in *Some Pictures of Poverty*, in January, and his story of hearing Chinese music, in October. There are a few slight things, one

of them an interview with Farny and other artists, about their early career, called *Struggle and Triumph* (May 27, 1877).

It was during 1877 that he was doing his translations from Gautier's stories, after two o'clock in the morning. He was not in a creative mood. As he himself wrote in his autobiographical letter (*Harper's Weekly*, October 15, 1904). "It was during intervals of night-work on the *Commercial* that I attempted a translation of Theophile Gautier's most powerful short stories. Part of the Mss. found a publisher some years after." (This disposes of the view that Major W. H. Robinson suggested the translation of Gautier to Hearn in New Orleans, as stated by Mr. John S. Kendall in an otherwise excellent article in the *Double Dealer*.<sup>1</sup>)

When I was in Cincinnati I met Hearn's city editor, Edwin Henderson. He told me that he sent Hearn on an assignment for a hydrophobia story, but that Hearn for the first time, fell down on his job. He did not go but instead went to the Mercantile Library where he was looking at some French books. Henderson did not discharge him, but covered the story himself. Hearn also heard Henderson describe a scene in a gulf state, and made up his mind to leave for the South. Henderson carried his grip to the station, Hearn being a diminutive fellow. Hearn's own story is he went South first on a vacation. He also had told Henderson he had lost his loyalty to the paper.

Mr. Henderson's recollections were published in the *Enquirer* for April 17, 1921, *Origin of Hearn's Literary Career*, under the pseudonym *Conteur*. (He still writes for the paper under that name.) In his description of Hearn

<sup>1</sup> *Hearn in New Orleans, The Double Dealer*, May, June 1922.

as he looked in the 'seventies, Henderson says what others have recognized, that except for the ocular deformity, Hearn's face was both handsome and intellectual. An interview with Henderson by Rudolph Benson, in the *Birmingham News*, is largely reprinted in Mr. John S. Kendall's article in the *Double Dealer*. Mr. Henderson repeated to me also substantially the same facts given in that interview.

I also enumerated to him the titles and subjects of most of the articles reprinted in this volume from the *Commercial*, just to put a corroborating seal of indentivity upon them (although I felt sure of the authorship from the internal evidence I have herein advanced). Mr. Henderson shook his head, smiled and said, from time to time, "Yes, yes, that is Hearn's, that is Hearn all over." There was no Sunday editor in those days, and the articles were written for Henderson who was one of the first to recognize Hearn's genius.

## V

After Hearn left Cincinnati, his friends except Watkin, Krehbiel and Tunison, heard no more from him. As Henderson said to me, with a slight touch of irritation: "After he went away I never heard from him. He never so much as even let on to any one that he even knew of my existence."

That may have been due to the difficulties Hearn had with the paper later because of not being paid for some articles.

In concluding the account of Hearn's life and work in Cincinnati, an important experience of his personal life must be mentioned, because of its influence upon his literary

work, and that is his cohabitation or common-law marriage (possibly legal marriage) with a young and pretty mulatto, Althea Foley. There was nothing sordid about this relation. It lasted for a number of years. Mrs. Wetmore gives the facts very briefly in the preface of her *Japanese Letters*. I met Mrs. Foley's son, by a former connection, W. L. Anderson, a highly intelligent quadroon, a printer of Cincinnati. As a boy, he remembered Hearn. He told me Hearn was a waiter in a boarding house kept by a Miss Haslam, at 215 Plum Street, where his own mother, Althea Foley, was a cook. The Cincinnati directory for June, 1872, gives Hearn's boarding house address at 215 Plum Street, his occupation as assistant editor of the Cincinnati *Trade List*; so Hearn must have continued in the boarding house where he had been a waiter after he obtained a position on the *Trade List*.<sup>1</sup> That Hearn loved the girl for at least several years, there was no doubt. For some reason or other, a passage was omitted from the *Letters to the Raven*, wherein he wrote to Watkin of his love, after he left Cincinnati. This passage appeared in the Cincinnati *Enquirer* after Hearn's death, in October 2, 1904. It was written from Memphis, October 31, 1877, and belongs to the part of the letter given on page 38 of the book, where

<sup>1</sup> Hearn's name first appeared in the Cincinnati directory for 1871 as an amanuensis, for 1872 as an assistant editor of the Cincinnati *Trade List*, 178 Elm, for 1875 as reporter of the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, 247 Vine, and for 1876 as Reporter for the Cincinnati *Commercial*, N. E. Cor. 4th & Race. No occupation is given for 1877. His name does not appear in the issues of 1873 or 1874. His residences are given in 1871 110 W. 6th St., in 1872 as boarding at 215 Plum, in 1875 as boarding at 110 Smith, and in 1877 his home is given as at 32 McFarland. No residence is given for 1876. On two occasions his name is spelt Hearne. He at times must have been doubtful as to whether to add a final e to his name. His name appears with an e also at times in the New Orleans directory.

asterisks indicate an omission. The omitted passage is as follows:

“Being unable to read without pain or indeed to find anything to while the time away, I cannot succeed in keeping away one fancy that is always trying to haunt me. I never dwelt much upon it even to you latterly, but it has become an absolute torture recently. I feel all the time as if I saw Mattie looking at me or following me and the thought comes to me of the little present she made me and a little woolly lock of hair she sent me, and her despairing effort to speak to me once more.”

There is something of remorse in this passage. Mr. Anderson tells me “Mattie” was Hearn’s pet name for Althea. Further on in the letter Hearn writes he weeps a good deal at nights. Mr. Anderson further tells me his mother sent Hearn money in Memphis.

We see that Hearn left Cincinnati on good terms with Althea Foley. Hearn’s love for Althea Foley shows why he was so lukewarm to the lady to whom the *Letters to a Lady* in Bronner’s volume are addressed. Mr. Anderson told me the name of The Lady, and said she caused his mother much jealousy and anxiety. She was the wife of a prominent physician, to whom she had been married for twenty years.

Hearn was attracted to any tale in real life or fiction that dealt with intermarriage between the races. The story of Baudelaire’s marriage to a dark woman appealed to him and the greatness of Loti was enhanced for him because Loti’s plots dealt with the loves of white men and women of other races. Hearn especially likes *Le Roman d’un Spahi*, which is a story of love of this kind. Hearn was led to place an exalted opinion upon a now forgotten novel

called *Toward the Gulf*, by Alice Morris Buckner, because it dealt with miscegenation. He reviewed the book editorially in the *Times-Democrat*, for January 2, 1887, and gave an account of the author which appeared in the *Times-Democrat* for January 30, 1887.

Hearn's experience is unconsciously reflected in his studies of women of mixed blood. Two of these from the *Cosmopolitan* are herein reprinted. In the *Two Years in the French West Indies*, and in *The Diary of an Impressionist (Creole Woman of the West Indies)*, we have further studies on the subject. (This latter article appeared originally in *Harper's Bazaar*, for February 1, 1890.) But the first work of this kind Hearn did for the *Enquirer* in August, 1874, in the article previously referred to about *Swarthy Beauty*. Several years later, in an excellent editorial in the *Item* for August 25, 1878, on *Fair Women and Dark Women*, he named famous dark women in history (not necessarily colored), and states his own preference for them.

As Mrs. Wetmore says, Hearn coming from England had no prejudices against intermarriage and he had a great sense of honor and he thought it was his duty to legalize his connection with Althea Foley who was the daughter of her Irish master, and she had a lover, a Mr. Anderson, a Scotchman, before she met Hearn. Hearn's conduct toward her was called by Mrs. Wetmore "a pathetic, high-minded piece of quixotism" and she adds: "Would that no man had ever been less tender and honest with more of the African race."

If Hearn had any other affairs with women, they are unknown. His ten years of residence in New Orleans were occupied with intense study and labors. The only com-



ment upon his love by Hearn himself that we have, printed for the first time in the *Atlantic Monthly*, in 1921, is in a letter to his brother, dated January 17, 1890, in which he says he had various temporary relations with women, in which he was the dupe until he succeeded in obtaining the wisdom of experience. Of one thing there can be no doubt; Hearn's relations with women were honorable. He believed in marriage, and no crime was in his opinion greater than that of seduction. In the *Item* he wrote strongly on this subject.

Hearn's marriage to a Japanese woman was a natural outcome of his ideas against race prejudice. And in the *Atlantic Monthly* for April, 1896, in an article *China and the Western World* (reprinted by the present editor in *Karma*, 1918), Hearn concludes that eventually there would be a fusion of races.

## VI

After looking up Hearn's article in the *Commercial* volumes, in the Congressional Library, I turned to the volumes of the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, from December 1881, to June, 1887, the period on which he had been employed on the paper. In preparing, a year before, the volume *Essays in European and Oriental Literature*, I had gone through the Sunday issue of that paper for his special editorials which usually appeared on Sundays. But I now went through the editorials of all the issues, and found many more editorials by Hearn. From those I had left over from last year and new editorials I discovered, I selected eighteen editorials and special articles from the *Times-Democrat* for this volume.

I found it even easier to identify the New Orleans *Times-*

*Democrat* articles than those in the Cincinnati papers. First, the same rules applied, reference to Doré and Lytton, the constant use of the ubiquitous "ghostly" and other favorite words. Again, I had as help Hearn's letters in the first volume of the *Life and Letters*, wherein he discusses with Krehbiel or O'Connor, the topics in which he was interested and about which he wrote editorials. I had Dr. Gould's list of about a hundred articles published between 1885 and 1887. I have reprinted six items mentioned by him, namely the three editorials in Creole philology, the articles *A Concord Compromise*, and *The Great "I am,"* and the elegy *The Dead Wife*.

On looking for the Hearn material in the *Times-Democrat*, I had in mind two articles mentioned in the letters of Hearn. I found both of these. In his first letter to W. D. O'Connor (author of *The Good, Gray Poet*), Hearn thanks him for a complimentary letter to the managing editor about the article, on *Gustave Doré* (vol. I, p. 268), February 1883, and in August 1883, Hearn thanks O'Connor for the praise of *The Pipes of Hameline* (sic) (vol. I, p. 274). I found both of these fine productions and they are reprinted here.

Often the subject-matter alone was sufficient to identify Hearn's work in the *Times-Democrat*. One can feel reasonably certain in reading the editorials and articles in the *Times-Democrat* for the period he was employed upon it, that everything there, dealing with Oriental subjects, Arabic, Hindoo, Chinese and Japanese, were by Hearn. Similarly, all the editorials treating of French Romanticism and Realism, were his. Further, one could be sure that whatever article referred to the gruesome, the fanciful,

the monstrous, the cadaverous, the exotic, the queer, was Hearn's. The editorials commenting upon articles in a French review or newspaper can be set down as his. Often he wrote the editorials on the translation he made for the paper from the French. Again, editorials dealing with topics from astronomy, geology, ethnology and archæology, all his favorite sciences, were by him. In September 1883, he wrote to Krehbiel that he wrote nearly all the scientific editorials for the paper, and one must admit he often gave credence to fantastic theories of scientists. He admired and often translated Flammarion.

I also found stories that he never collected and they are often better than those he issued in book-form. I reprint all these stories.

Any one familiar with the later Hearn observes the same personality in the Hearn of the eighties as in the Hearn of the nineties; his lectures on literature are even made up often from his editorials upon which he drew from memory. He repeated himself in later life often and plagiarized from himself.

Again, Hearn would even repeat the same simile or metaphor. Take this one which he uses many times—"Among the Arabs . . . wives keep in their tents a little deer, the gazelle, which is famous for the brilliancy and beauty of its eyes. By constantly looking at this charming pet the Arab wife hopes to bring into the world some day a child with eyes as beautiful as the eyes of the gazelle." (*Appreciations of Poetry* p. 10.). The lecture on *Love in English Poetry*, from which this passage was taken, was delivered in the late nineties. But he had employed similar similes in many editorials that I came across; two of

these I reprinted in *Essays in European and Oriental Literature, Idealism and Naturalism* and *The Future of Idealism*.

Since issuing *Essays in European and Oriental Literature*, which contains forty-seven articles of which I had to identify twenty-six by internal evidence, Mrs. Wetmore, his biographer and associate on the *Times-Democrat* from 1883 to 1887, has confirmed my views as to the authorship.

It was only after I had copied many articles in this collection and looked over them that I made a discovery so simple, that it is rather surprising that it first eluded me. I had not yet made this discovery on publishing the *Essays in European and Oriental Literature*. I always knew Hearn was fussy about punctuation and indulged in the semicolon, but I soon learned *that punctuation alone would identify an article by Hearn* in the *Times-Democrat*. On looking down the editorial page of the *Times-Democrat*, I would notice an editorial with about twenty or more *dashes* often following a comma, or a semicolon, and another editorial *without a single dash*. Here was a sure clue. It almost seemed as if a benevolent Providence furnished this means to the future student of Hearn to identify these articles. All of his newspaper and periodical writings since 1878, when he went on the *Item*, and all his books are sprinkled with thousands of dashes, generally following a comma or a semicolon. The writings in the Cincinnati period occasionally have these dashes, but he was only a reporter, did not read the proofs of his articles, and could not dictate his views on punctuation to the composing room. Besides, these articles were in very small type and space was valuable. As his biographer says, punctuation always remained a matter of great importance to him, and that is

why it was a great agony to him when he was not allowed to correct his proofs; and he even said he would surrender his royalties rather than be deprived of the privilege of correcting his proofs.

Sometimes being away on a vacation, or for some other reason, he did not read his proofs, and no doubt there were some articles by him without the "dashes" in them.

As Mrs. Wetmore wrote me, he often had arguments in the composing room about the punctuation. In a letter from Japan, to his former employer, Page M. Baker, the editor of the *Times-Democrat* (vol. II, p. 287), he recalls how they read the proofs. Mr. Charles Donnaud, of New Orleans, a friend of Hearn's, told me that Baker gave orders in the composing room that Hearn's punctuation should be strictly followed.

To those who think that all this is rather trivial, I merely reply that trivial or not, you will find the dashes as the clue to the identification of the Hearn articles, in the *Times-Democrat*, when all other clues fail.

But Hearn was of course not the first writer to use the dash, though he may be one of the very first who uses it after the comma, the colon or the semicolon. Where did he get his ideas of punctuation? As with many other ideas, he was indebted here to Poe. (Walt Whitman also imitated Poe in this respect).<sup>1</sup> Lovers of Poe may recall that one of the first essays of his *Marginalia*, the fifth in Griswold's version, is taken up with the philosophy of the dash. Poe's idea was that the dash represented a second thought—an emendation. "It means to make my meaning more distinct." And the dash predominates in Poe's work as it

<sup>1</sup> See *The Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman*, edited by Emory Holloway. Introduction, Page LXII.

does in Hearn's. But Hearn uses it far more frequently and he uses it where a comma or a semicolon could do, and in one respect he uses the dash differently from Poe by letting it follow a comma, or a semicolon or colon.

I have retained Hearn's punctuation throughout this work. The only books of Hearn's where the "dashes" are missing are the four volumes of lectures taken down by his students. Hearn never wrote these lectures fully out and of course never saw the proofs, nor even expected the publication of these lectures.

Because of Hearn's system of punctuation in the *Times-Democrat* articles, it is not necessary to go into detail about the reasons for the Hearn authorship of the articles from it in this volume.

## VI

Hearn had book publications in mind for many of his newspaper writings. In fact, he wrote many of them with the sole object of collecting them. Some of the articles were written for magazines first and when they were rejected, he published them in his paper. His disgust at his repeated failure to get into the magazines, caused many querulous passages in his letters, and he attacked the magazine system in several of his editorials.

For years he had in mind to publish a book of Arabesques, —a volume containing his studies on Arabian subjects. But he never published such a volume. He could not get his *The First Muezzin*, in a magazine, and gave it finally to the *Times-Democrat*. I published this in *Karma* (1918), from Mr. Krehbiel's scrap-book, though I later discovered the story in the paper for October 12, 1884.

Hearn also intending publishing a book about the Creoles.

In 1878 he wrote to Krehbiel an account of the Creoles and said that the miscegenated French and African dialects offered pretty peculiarities worth a volume. He also wrote that he had undertaken to collect the Creole legends, traditions and songs of Louisiana.

He wrote, as an authority on Creole subjects, to Chamberlain in 1890, sending him a Creole grammar. He mentions the grammar of the Mauritian Creole by Baissac, as well as grammars of other Creole dialects by Saint Quentin, Thomas and Mercier. Four years later he again wrote Chamberlain sending him a copy of Creole prints, saying should he ever recover his library he could give him an almost complete set of works relating to all the French Creole dialects. Later in the same year, he wrote to him saying he had stacks of manuscript Creole compositions taken down from dictation, folk songs and stories. He praised Dr. Mercier's essay and criticized Fortier's article.

In the eighties Charles Godfrey Leland had also called upon Hearn for help on the Creole patois, and there is extant a letter to Leland by Hearn on the subject in Mr. Swartz's collection in his store in New Orleans.

Hearn never completed his book on the Creoles any more than he did the one on Arabic subjects. All he brought out was a slight dictionary of Creole proverbs of less than fifty pages under the title *Gombo Zhèbes*. This was issued by Will H. Coleman, in 1885, and in the preface, Hearn apologized for the slenderness of the work hoping that "it may constitute the nucleus of a more exhaustive work to appear in course of time."

Hearn wrote an essay about the Creole patois for two issues of *Harper's Weekly*, in 1885 and a year and a half later, followed this up in the *Times-Democrat* with three

other articles on the subject. I have reprinted these articles.

The value of study of the Creoles was suggested in 1887, by Whitman who wrote an article about the New Orleans of 1848; he regretted deeply that he did not cultivate better knowledge of the French and Spanish Creole New Orleans people. "I have an idea," he said, "that there is much and of importance about the Latin race contributions to American Nationality in the South and Southwest that will never be put with sympathetic understanding and tact on record." (*Complete Prose Works*, pp. 440-441.)

The interest that the Creole patois has for philologists can be seen in a work like Professor Otto Jespersen's *Language*. He takes up the Creole language as spoken in Mauritius. He regards Creole as one of the "Pidgin" languages, that is, a language that grows up to establish a means of communication between two races who each speak a different language. For example, the Chinese in China and also California speak "pidgin" English. The word "pidgin" is a Chinese distortion of the English word "business." Jespersen bases his few pages on Mauritius Creole on M. C. Baissac's *Etude Sur Le Par Oil Creole Mauricien*, 1880 (mentioned by Hearn), and other books by the same authority. The colored slaves who came to the island learned French from their masters but the language has very little of French grammar. French words also underwent change when the blacks found them difficult to pronounce. Creole is giving place to better French and is thus changing, and hence Hearn's studies have value.

Hearn translated many of Baissac's stories from his *Creole Récits* for the *Times-Democrat*. Among Hearn's studies of the negro Creoles, I have chosen only those that



related to their patois. The articles are scholarly and of philological interest, and it would be a pity that the fruits of his studies should be lost.

The Creole articles in this volume are the result of Hearn's studies in a subject that interested him just as soon as he reached New Orleans. His Ozias Midwinter letters to the *Commercial* contain his first comments on the Creole patois.

Hearn also had intended publishing a book of Southern Sketches. In a letter to O'Connor, March 1883, *Life and Letters*, (vol. I, p. 268), he wrote he had been absent from the city for a week in the swampy regions of Southern Louisiana with Harper's artist for whom he was writing a series of Southern Sketches. The artist was J. O. Davidson, whom Hearn accompanied to Saint Malo, the Philippine village, near New Orleans.

This expedition, however, had been fitted out by the *Times-Democrat*, and Mr. Charles Whitney of that paper was also in the expedition. For a short time the party was not heard of and on March 11, 1883, the paper had an editorial, *Lost Expedition*. Hearn was mentioned as follows: "Mr. Hearn wore a white-handled razor in his stocking and shouldered a large and deadly telescope."

The literary results of the expedition were two articles on Saint Malo and an account of the Teche scenery in Louisiana. One of the Saint Malo articles appeared in the *Times-Democrat*, for March 10, 1883, and the other one much enlarged and improved, appeared in *Harper's Weekly*, with illustrations. I have reprinted only the latter of these two. My discovery of the *Harper's Weekly* article was accidental for there was no bibliographical record of it. I found it while looking for a portrait of Hearn, which appeared in the

same issue. The other Southern sketch on the Teche scenery appeared in the *Times-Democrat*, under the title *The Garden of Paradise*. It is a beautiful prose poem of landscape scenery.

Hearn also intended including in his volume of Southern Sketches, *Torn Letters*, included herein among the *Tales in Poetical Prose*. This story is not as usually thought, an earlier version of *Chita*. It is a different tale entirely. The prose painting is inspired by the same scenes that inspired that novel. The only version of *Chita* before publication in book-form, appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, in 1888.

*Torn Letters* is a masterpiece of poetry. It was signed and won Hearn many new admirers. The heroine is a Basque, a descendant of a very primitive race, as Hearn says. He believed the Basques were descended from the prehistoric Cro-Magnons and had even written an editorial on this doubtful view called *Some Grotesque Theorizing*, May 24, 1882.

Reference to his trips to the scenes where he got the material for this story appear in letters to O'Connor and Krehbiel.

He wrote O'Connor in 1883, that he proposed making his first effort at original work for the summer of 1884—"a very tiny volume of sketches<sup>1</sup> in our Creole archipelago at the skirts of the Gulf" (vol. I, p. 291). He added he sought the Orient at home among the Lascar and Chinese Colonies, and also the prehistoric in the characteristics of strange European settlers. He also wrote Krehbiel in October 1884, that he had been away a good deal, in the Creole archipelagoes of the Gulf, and would soon be off again, "to

<sup>1</sup> Another one of these sketches was *The Post-Office*, the *Times-Democrat*, October 19, 1884, reprinted by Mr. Hutson in *Fantastics*.

make more studies for my little book of sketches." He sent an example of his work, adding that he took as much pains with these sketches as with magazine work, and that the plan was philosophical and pantheistic. He then asked him if he had seen his story *Torn Letters*, about the *Biscayena*, saying the facts were not wholly true, that he was nearly in love, but never told her so. He believed he was face to face with a beauty of the Tertiary period 300,000 years ago, a beauty of the oldest of the world's races, according to the theory he held about the Basques.

Of the other five *Tales in Poetical Prose*, included in this volume, three properly belonged to his *Stray Leaves from Strange Literature*—*Subhadra*, *The Dead Wife* and *Bidasari*; but he omitted them from that volume.

*The Dead Wife* is as Hearn says, after St. Julien's French translation from the Chinese. It is mentioned on page 386 of Gould's book in the list of translations, the titles of which were taken from Hearn's scrapbook; but in the newspaper it appeared on the editorial page, the page where his reconstructed tales appeared, whereas his translations appeared on another page under the title *Foreign Press*. *The Dead Wife* belonged to the *Stray Leaves* rather than *Some Chinese Ghosts*, however. In the *Stray Leaves*, there appear two other tales based on St. Julien's translations from the Chinese. It is apparent that *The Dead Wife* is like the Chinese tales in *Stray Leaves*, a "reconstruction" and not a mere translation from a translation.<sup>1</sup>

The *Three Dreams* is marked as "Edited from the Note Books of an Impressionist," the title of a book Hearn intended publishing which was to include his descriptions

<sup>1</sup> Another one of the Chinese tales in *Hiouen-Thsang*, the *Times-Democrat*, June 25, 1882, was reprinted by Mr. Hutson in *Fantastics*.

of Florida. After Hearn's death Mr. Greenslet obtained four of these articles from Hearn's notebooks and carried out Hearn's intentions, publishing the book. He added four other sketches on Arabic and Creole subjects. *Three Dreams* was apparently missing in the notebooks, for it belonged to that series.

*St. Brandan's Christmas* is the only New Orleans *Times-Democrat* reprint in this volume, lacking in Hearn's characteristic punctuation. But there seems to be no doubt it is his. There is his favorite word "ghastly"; there is the subject of St. Brandan himself which had fascinated him in Washington Irving's story, Hearn often mentions *The Adalantado of The Seven Cities*.

I also sent copies of the story to Mrs. Elizabeth Bissland Wetmore and Julie K. W. Baker, both of whom had worked with Hearn on the *Times-Democrat* and were familiar with his work. They are both inclined to regard the story as Hearn's.

Early in his career Hearn formed an ideal of poetic prose, which he got from Baudelaire. In a letter to Krehbiel October 1886 (vol. I, p. 379), he speaks of his ancient dream of a poetical prose, in irregular rhythm, which he expects to realize at last; and later, March 1887, he wrote to O'Connor, he wanted to finish some tiny volume of notes of travel, always keeping to his dream of poetical prose (vol. I, p. 383). His *Fantastics* which he began writing in 1879, for the *Item*, are among his first New Orleans efforts in poetical prose; but he was writing poetical prose in 1875 and in 1876, Cincinnati, as anyone can see who will read the valentine vagaries and the butterfly and frost fancies, herein reprinted. He did not, however, believe in the use of poetical prose for all forms of writings. He confined

its use to particular subjects,—“dreams, reveries, the thoughts that men think in solitude,” as he says in his lecture on Baudelaire, *Interpretations of Literature* (vol. II, p. 84). Later in life he came, however, to worship simplicity of style.

The essays on *Cosmological Speculation* show the thinker who was absorbed in the mysteries and destinies of the universe. His interest in astronomy was perennial. The fate of the universe interested him and in his later essays he often compared the Occidental and Oriental views on the subject. The essays on *The Life of Stars* and on *The Destiny of Solar Systems*, are good accounts of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. This subject had fascinated him ever since he took up his studies of the Hindoo philosophy. He first touched on the theory in an editorial on the *Item* (July 19, 1878), called *New Theories and Old Ones*. He also made it the subject of a fantastic, *Metempsychosis* (*Item*, September 7, 1880), reprinted in *Fantastics*. He found modern astronomy corroborated the view; he later read Spencer's presentation of it in *First Principles*. His own presentation of the theory in the essay on *The Destiny of Solar Systems* is masterly.

As with Nietzsche, the idea became the pivot of his philosophy of the universe, though he took a different ethical attitude from Nietzsche. Too little emphasis has been laid upon Hearn's work as a thinker and philosopher; he had other gifts besides powers of artistic description. The excellent articles *A Concord Compromise* and *The Great "I Am"* show Hearn as an original thinker on problems of life and death.

I have omitted from this work Hearn's editorials on literary and oriental topics, as well as his political socio-

logical, and educational articles. The work he did for the *Times-Democrat* is simply enormous. No doubt the time will come when the best of it will be collected.

## VII

There are a number of personal allusions to Hearn in the *Times-Democrat*, to which I wish to call attention.

When his translations from Gautier appeared there was a special article about the book in the issue of March 26, 1882 (Gautier's name was spelled Gauthier, and Hearn's name received an additional e). There was a still better and longer article about *Stray Leaves from Strange Literature* (July 6, 1884). These reviews so faithfully interpret him that the admiring friend or friends who wrote them, must at least have submitted the reviews for his perusal and revision before they appeared in the paper.

The Gautier review mentions Hearn's *Fantastics* in the city *Item* and his other writings on the *Times-Democrat* and elsewhere. It contains Hearn's ideas on translations and finds in his style a similarity to that of Gautier—"warmth of color, fervidity of thought, grace of expression, elegance of form and an imagination at the same time wildly luxuriant and highly cultivated."

The tribute to him in the article on *Stray Leaves* is even more splendid. It calls him a "modest retiring scholar and student," speaks of his "highly polished and scholarly contributions" to the *Times-Democrat*, of his translations and refers to him "as the writer of articles exhibiting scientific knowledge and attainments, as well as of classic stories and fanciful tales of rare and impassioned loveliness of thought and diction." The review speaks of his filling in the pictures "with the wealth of imagery, the Titian-like

intensity of coloring, the lambent play of poetic fancy, which are nature's own priceless gifts to himself and which his broad and deep culture has only served to accentuate and determine."

There was later also a brief review of *Some Chinese Ghosts* in the *Times-Democrat*.

Sometimes a contribution of his to a weekly was copied in the *Times-Democrat*, like *Rabyah's Last Ride*, from the *Harper's Bazaar*, in 1887.

There also appeared at times reprints of favorable notices of Hearn's from other papers; one of these was a quotation April 30, 1882, from a flattering review by Richard Henry Stoddard in the *New York Mail*, of Hearn's Gautier translation. This fact did not prevent Hearn from later accusing Stoddard of plagiarizing his poem, *The Judgment of Solomon*, from *Boutimar*, *The Dove*, in *Stray Leaves*. (See Caroline Ticknor, *Glimpses of Authors*.)

A note in the issue of April 25, 1885, mentioned Hearn's visit to East Florida and quotes a letter of a trip to be made to St. Augustine. However on the following day his return was announced and his description of the Florida scenery to a friend dwelt upon the announcement that his work on the subject would soon appear in the paper.

But his name actually appears in a poem contributed to the paper June 14, 1885, by Robert Burns Wilson, the poet and artist of Frankfort, Kentucky, called *The Threnody*. It is addressed to Page M. Baker, the editor, and refers to "a cloud-wrought vision from Lafcadio Hearn."

An extract was also reprinted December 21, 1884, from a letter to Hearn by Protap Chunder Roy, for his editorial on the *Datavaya Bharata Karyalaya* (reprinted in *Essays in European and Oriental Literature*).

On December 26, 1884, it was announced that Pierre Loti would write directly for the *Times-Democrat* and that Lafcadio Hearn would do the translating for the paper from the original manuscripts.

The paper also stated that Hearn was mentioned in an article in *Harper's* for May 1887 in *The Recent Movement in Southern Literature*.

There may have been other references to Hearn, but up to the time he left New Orleans in 1887, in spite of having published four volumes—one of which was a translation and the other a collection of Creole proverbs, his popular reputation was mainly a local one. Yet the best writers in the country admired Hearn. This list includes George W. Cable, Joel Chandler Harris, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Richard Henry Stoddard, Charles Godfrey Leland, Richard Watson Gilder, Henry Mills Alden, William D. O'Connor, Charles Dudley Warner—not a bad host of literary admirers for the eighties.

## VIII

I went to New Orleans for the purpose of going through the files of the *Item*, of which the only copy is in the *Item* office. A number of issues, at least thirty-five, are already missing, but most of Hearn's work is still to be found in its pages. For the *Item* he chiefly wrote editorials almost daily, besides book reviews and fantastics (the latter since collected). Limitations of space have prevented me from reprinting more than a few of his editorials; six of these I have called *Studies in Human Nature*; and I have also included the beautiful study of a favorite topic, *Nightmare and Nightmare Legends*, August 4, 1878, which subject he expanded in his essay *Nightmare Touch* in *Shadowings*



(1900), and on which he expatiated to Chamberlain in 1893 (*Japanese Letters*, pp. 212–214). The episode of his childhood fear mentioned in these essays was first described in one of his articles in the *Enquirer*, January 18, 1874, in *Unwilling Spirits*, in a passage I have quoted above.

I also reproduce the excellent article on the *Philosophy of Imaginative Art* (November 12, 1878), the subject of which is touched on in a letter written later to Krehbiel (vol. I, pp. 208–209), ancient art as the product of various religious ideas, an interesting concession by Hearn, the free-thinker.

The six articles, *Studies in Human Nature*, show Hearn's profound insight into human motives and conduct. The editorials are studies of his own temperament and were prompted by personal experiences, one of these being his ill-fated business venture in keeping a restaurant and his being defrauded by his absconding partner. In a letter written in February, 1879 to Watkin, Hearn tells of his restaurant and his suspicions of his partner. He also wrote to Krehbiel in 1879 that he was going into business for himself, the restaurant business.

The contact with people made Hearn learn things about human nature and conduct that he never could get out of books; and there is something cynical about his views of human nature. In the first essay, *Progressive Lying*, he anticipates Oscar Wilde's *The Decay of Lying*. The essays also help to explain the suspicious nature characteristic of Hearn.

There are many fine literary articles in the *Item*, and we have here excellent literary articles, editorials on music, on communists, on free-thinking, on Oriental topics, yet many of the editorials are commonplace. But at least one hun-

dred good articles could be collected from the *Item*, besides the squibs and editorials collected by Mr. Hutson and called *Creole Sketches*. On the whole the editorial work in the *Item* is inferior to that in the *Times-Democrat*.

In New Orleans I met Mr. Harry S. Michel who told me that it was Hearn's friend, Major W. H. Robinson, who introduced Hearn to Bigney, the city editor of the *Item*. Hearn had suffered seven months of privation as his letters to Watkin show. He entered upon his duties June 15, 1878.

While looking for some translations in New Orleans, I found that Hearn had been contributing book reviews and translations (many from the Spanish) every Sunday for the *Democrat*, since May 23, 1880. Thus for a year and a half while employed on the *Item* he also wrote for the *Democrat*. It was here he started his Sunday department, *The Foreign Press*, which he merely continued on the *Times-Democrat*, when the consolidation took place in December 1881. He then left the *Item*.

This extra work on *The Democrat* has revealed much new material by him.

Hearn's work on the *Times-Democrat* ceased at the end of May, 1887. The literary editorials were continued by Julie K. W. Baker, the wife of Marion Baker, the Sunday editor, and she adopted from Hearn, his system of punctuation which he taught her, so that the *Times-Democrat*, beginning with her first editorial on Stevenson, on June 5, continued for a long time Hearn's punctuation in Mrs. Baker's editorials. (From a private letter to me by Mrs. J. K. W. Baker.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The New Orleans City directories from 1879-1887, which I examined in the State museum in the Cabildo Building, tell the brief story of Hearn's

I have not gone as thoroughly into Hearn's life and work in New Orleans for the reason that Mr. Edward L. Tinker whom I met in New Orleans is giving us an account thereof in a book which Dodd, Mead & Company are publishing. I have not seen Mr. Tinker's book except the three chapters he has published from it for periodicals and newspapers. Whatever Hearn discoveries each of us has made have been independent of one another. Nor have I dwelt on Hearn's brief stay in my native city Philadelphia in 1889 where he was the guest of Dr. George M. Gould at No. 119 S. 17th St., a house still standing. Hearn was then mainly occupied reading proofs. He also spent a few months in New York before leaving for Japan in March 1890.

## IX

For the dates of all, but one (*Saint Malo*) of Hearn's articles in periodicals, in this volume, I am indebted to Bronner's book and to Laura Stedman's bibliography in Dr. Gould's book. I have succeeded in adding to this bibliography a few more items to contributions to periodicals by Hearn.

residences and occupations in New Orleans. He is not mentioned at all in the directory for 1880. His occupations for 1879 are given as associate editor of the *Daily City Item*; for 1883, as journalist, *Times-Democrat*; for 1884, as journalist; for 1885 as editor; and for 1886 and 1887 as editorial staff of *Times-Democrat*. His occupation for 1881 is not listed.

His residences under the old number system are given for 1879 as Bourbon, between St. Louis and Toulouse; for 1881, 106 Bourbon; for 1884 and 1885 (boards), 278 Canal; for 1886 and 1887, 55 Camp. No residence is given for 1883.

As in the Cincinnati directory his name is spelt a few times—Hearne, and the name is laid out several times in larger letters than the rest of the names in the directory.

We know that when he first come to New Orleans he lived at 228 Baronne St.

It was thought that Hearn's first contribution to *Harper's Weekly* was one on *Quaint New Orleans and Its Inhabitants*, for December 6, 1884, but at the same time I found the *Saint Malo* article given in this volume, I discovered two other articles by Hearn in *Harper's Weekly*, on February 24, 1883, *New Orleans in Carnival Garb*, and *The New Cotton Exchange in New Orleans*, March 17, 1883. I have not reprinted these.<sup>1</sup>

These three articles preceded the one on *The Scenes of Cable's Romances (The Century)*, November 1883, which had hitherto been the first known magazine article of Hearn.

The two articles on *The Last of the Voudoos* and *New Orleans Superstitions* from *Harper's Weekly*, were written in the midst of his editorial work on the *Times-Democrat*, and represent his negro studies, in New Orleans, the same subject that had fascinated him in Cincinnati.

His *Creole Patois*, which appeared in two issues of *Harper's Weekly*, belong to his studies on the Creole speech that appeared in the *Times-Democrat*, and are included with them.

The five monthly magazine articles are also reprinted in book form for the first time, though the *Scenes of Cable's Romances*, was reprinted in *The Historical Sketch and Guide Book of New Orleans* in 1885, and *The Last of the New Orleans Fencing Masters* was reprinted in the first issue of *The Double Dealer*. The two articles from the *Cosmopolitan* were written when Mrs. Elizabeth Bisland Wetmore was on the staff of that magazine and belong really to *The Two Years in the French West Indies*.

<sup>1</sup> Hearn also wrote seven articles about the New Orleans Exposition for *Harper's Weekly* and *Harper's Bazaar* in 1885. These deserve reprinting.

The article on *A Winter Journey to Japan* is from *Harper's Magazine* and was published in the magazine in spite of Hearn's quarrel with the firm.

## X

What is very odd is that Hearn rarely referred to his daily newspaper articles, in the letters he wrote after he went to Japan. He had spent months, perhaps years, on research in recondite lore, gathering together facts from encyclopedias, reference books, histories, and yet he does not hark back to the newspaper products of his early scholarship. No newspaper articles and essays were less ephemeral or better written than his, yet the work once done and printed he proceeded to forget about it.

Why does Hearn rarely refer to his early efforts and not think of issuing say, some of the Cincinnati articles in book form?

No one can understand Hearn who does not take into consideration his innate and sincere modesty. His ideas of art were so great that he always underestimated himself. Whenever he changed his views or style or some of his ideas, everything he wrote up to that time became his anathema. He was always attacking his own books and his translations.

He wrote derogatorily even of what some consider his best book on Japan, *Glimpses From Unfamiliar Japan*. He said it was full of faults. (January 1895, *Japanese Letters*, p. 198.) When he wanted to feel properly humble, he wrote to MacDonald in 1898 (vol. II, p. 356) he read his book and would howl how badly he wrote and that he was only a twenty-fifth rate workman and that he ought to be

kicked. It was disfigured by faults of "journalistic" style and written before he began to understand that it is difficult to understand Japan (1902), (vol. II, p. 467.)

A man of such temperament would naturally look with disdain on the articles written for newspapers in his twenties and thirties, when he thus dismissed what people regard his masterpiece. Hearn's judgment as regards his own work cannot be trusted.

One of the rare bits of self confidence he showed was when he said he had stowed away in him somewhere forms larger than those he had been able to use. This was in 1895.

However, he once did consent to the collection of some of his "early" work. In 1903, the year before his death, at the suggestion of Elizabeth Bisland, he was in a frame of mind to sponsor a collection of "Juvenilia" as he modestly wanted to call some of his writings done before he was forty. He wanted to include his translations from Gautier, revised, and his *Some Chinese Ghosts* and (3) "Miscellaneous Essays and Sketches upon Oriental subjects, formerly contributed to the T-D (4) Miscellaneous Sketches on Southern subjects, two or three, and fantasies, with a few verses thrown in," (vol. II, p. 500). The project fell through, Mrs. Wetmore wrote me, because she was not able to secure copies of the original newspaper articles, and because she was not able at that time to go to New Orleans.

This work partly carries out then a plan Hearn himself countenanced, and except for omitting the Oriental essays, it includes far more than was contemplated by him. The work further embodies early projects of his he was never able to complete like the Creole articles and Southern sketches. It is characteristic of the man's modesty that he mentioned nothing in his letter to Mrs. Wetmore about his

articles on the other papers on which he was employed, the *Enquirer*, the *Commercial* and the *Item*.

Though Hearn hated newspaper work, he was in a sense always a newspaper man. He was a reporter and an editorial writer his whole life. In the Japanese period he was practically doing what he did on the newspapers. As a newspaper man he went about and chose his subjects and wrote down his remarkable observations with an imaginative accuracy that is almost miraculous for a blind man. This is what he did in Japan. In Cincinnati and New Orleans he made researches in all sorts of queer lore accumulating interesting facts from books, and enlivening them with his shrewd comments. His newspaper articles were not less scholarly than his Japanese books. Just as he later studied the Japanese, so he studied the life of the negroes and poor in Cincinnati, or the Creoles and various Oriental races in and about New Orleans. He reported their songs and proverbs, the peculiarities of their customs. His later methods did not even change.

In no writer is the saying better expressed than in Hearn—"The child is the father of the man." In his newspaper writings you will find his later interests, in insects, birds, flowers, names, cemeteries, ghosts, his favorite ideas about popular superstitions, inherited memory, eternal recurrence, the curse of our mechanical civilization.

Yet there were practically no newspaper articles ever written in America as a daily task that had less of the journalistic about them than these, for Hearn's subjects were of permanent interest, and his treatment was always artistic; and the writer was a genius.

I cannot admit that the material in this book is always inferior to his later work. Often, indeed, it is better.

The early work has the first and free enthusiasm of the youth in his later twenties and early thirties. He was a master of the language. His subjects were wide and miscellaneous. He would write a story, a philosophic essay, a scholarly discourse, on an erudite theme or a picture of life in the slums or a reconstruction of an Oriental tale.

It is a mistake to think of Hearn solely as a "writer on Japan." Japan gave him nothing; he only found there an opportunity for exercising his universal powers of observation and description, or for projecting his interesting literary personality and for developing his philosophical theories.

He had done in America precisely what he did in Japan. He himself, not Japan, is the interesting subject in his writings on Japan. He was so great an observer and had so powerful an imagination and such command of language and so individual a mental outlook, that we may say he only found in Japan the pretexts for exercising his gifts. He was not a mere traveler reporting what he saw. He made sketches to expand a favorite idea or comment upon a particular phase of life or collect data to illustrate a personal viewpoint. Hearn the artist is always present then in Hearn the journalist.

I hope and believe most readers will agree with me that the work in these volumes was worth resurrecting. Hearn's reputation will most likely increase as the years go by. Edmund Clarence Stedman has so far proved a true prophet when he wrote that "Hearn will in time be as much of a romantic personality and tradition as Poe now is." Possibly some day Cincinnati and New Orleans will honor themselves by erecting statues to this greatest literary man who ever abode in those cities.



In editing the stories, articles and editorials for this volume, I have made absolutely no change in Hearn's text. Indeed, all are reprinted as he wrote them. If I have omitted (very rarely) anything longer than a few lines, I have noted such omission. If I have added necessary words, I have put them in brackets. In many cases, Hearn was restrained by the exigencies of his trade, and had to introduce local allusions or reference to current ephemeral events to get his article or story across.

Hearn after all had great liberty on the papers with which he was connected. The editors and owners allowed him full opportunity for introducing his favorite topics and displaying his unusual learning and projecting his strange personality. He had liberty to choose subjects that interested him. Very few newspapers to-day would use the literary articles Hearn wrote. Full credit is due to Murat Halstead and Edwin Henderson of the *Commercial*, and Page M. Baker and Marion Baker, of the *Times-Democrat*, for giving him a free hand. Likewise, credit is due Faran and McClean, and John Cockerill, of the *Enquirer* and Colonel John W. Fairfax and Mark Bigney of the *Item*. The names of these four newspapers will be immortalized because of Hearn's contributions to them from 1872 to 1887, just as to-day the *Southern Literary Messenger* and *The Token* live because of the contributions of Poe and Hawthorne to them, respectively.

## XI

I wish to thank the editors of the *Century Magazine* for permission to reprint the article *The Scenes of Cable's Romances*, the copyright of the issue of the magazine in

which it appeared having been renewed by the proprietors.

I also wish to thank the various friends of Hearn whom I had the privilege of meeting, for matters of personal information. I am indebted for some facts to the late Captain Mitchell McDonald, Hearn's literary executor, who was killed in the Japanese earthquake, and the late Henry E. Krehbiel, musical editor of the *New York Tribune*. Ellwood Hendrick, of New York City, Elizabeth Bisland Wetmore, Washington, D. C., Dr. Rudolph Matas, Colonel John W. Fairfax,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Charles Donnaud, Mr. Henry S. Michel, of New Orleans, and Mr. Edwin Henderson and W. L. Anderson of Cincinnati have all given me valuable information in interviews with them.

I want also to thank Mrs. Hearn (Koizumi) of Tokio, Japan, for a copy of the Catalogue of Hearn's library; and Mrs. Julie K. Wetherell, (Mrs. Marion Baker), for matters imparted to me by correspondence.

I am also indebted to Mr. John S. Kendall, of Tulane University, New Orleans, and Mrs. H. F. Farny, of Cincinnati, who though neither of them knew Hearn, gave me some information about him, by virtue of their contact with people who were Hearn's friends.

I am very grateful to those librarians and their assistants who put at my disposal the sixty odd bound, dusty newspaper volumes, which I went through in my Hearn researches. I wish to thank those who did this service for me in the Congressional Library in Washington; in the archives of the City Hall and in the Louisiana State Museum, at the Cabildo, in New Orleans; in the Cincinnati Public Library and in the Mercantile Library of Cincinnati.

I am of course also deeply indebted to the proprietors

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Fairfax died May 18, 1924.

## Introduction

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and employees at the *Item* in New Orleans for permission to have access to the files of that paper and for the privilege of having articles copied from it.

ALBERT MORDELL

PHILADELPHIA

April 24, 1924



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AN AMERICAN MISCELLANY





## THE CEDAR CLOSET

It happened ten years ago, and it stands out, and ever will stand out, in my memory like some dark, awful barrier dividing the happy, gleeful years of girlhood, with their foolish, petulant sorrows and eager, innocent joys, and the bright, lovely life which has been mine since. In looking back, that time seems to me shadowed by a dark and terrible brooding cloud, bearing in its lurid gloom what, but for love and patience the tenderest and most untiring, might have been the bolt of death, or, worse a thousand times, of madness. As it was, for months after "life crept on a broken wing," if not "through cells of madness," yet verily "through haunts of horror and fear." O, the weary, weary days and months when I longed piteously for rest! when sunshine was torture, and every shadow filled with horror unspeakable; when my soul's craving was for death; to be allowed to creep away from the terror which lurked in the softest murmur of the summer breeze, the flicker of the shadow of the tiniest leaf on the sunny grass, in every corner and curtain-fold in my dear old home. But love conquered all, and I can tell my story now, with awe and wonder, it is true, but quietly and calmly.

Ten years ago I was living with my only brother in one of the quaint, ivy-grown, red-gabled rectories which are so picturesquely scattered over the fair breadth of England. We were orphans, Archibald and I; and I had been the busy, happy mistress of his pretty home for only one year after leaving school, when Robert Draye asked me to be his wife. Robert and Archie were old friends, and my

new home, Draye's Court, was only separated from the parsonage by an old gray wall, a low iron-studded door in which admitted us from the sunny parsonage dawn to the old, old park which had belonged to the Drayes for centuries. Robert was lord of the manor; and it was he who had given Archie the living of Draye in the Wold.

It was the night before my wedding day, and our pretty home was crowded with the wedding guests. We were all gathered in the large old-fashioned drawing-room after dinner. When Robert left us late in the evening, I walked with him, as usual, to the little gate for what he called our last parting; we lingered awhile under the great walnut-tree, through the heavy, somber branches of which the September moon poured its soft pure light. With his last good-night kiss on my lips and my heart full of him and the love which warmed and glorified the whole world for me, I did not care to go back to share in the fun and frolic in the drawing-room, but went softly upstairs to my own room. I say "my own room," but I was to occupy it as a bedroom to-night for the first time. It was a pleasant south room, wainscoted in richly-carved cedar, which gave the atmosphere a spicy fragrance. I had chosen it as my morning room on my arrival in our home; here I had read and sang and painted, and spent long, sunny hours while Archibald was busy in his study after breakfast. I had had a bed arranged there as I preferred being alone to sharing my own larger bedroom with two of my bridesmaids. It looked bright and cozy as I came in; my favorite low chair was drawn before the fire, whose rosy light glanced and flickered on the glossy dark walls, which gave the room its name, "The Cedar Closet." My maid was busy preparing my toilet table, I sent her away, and sat down to wait

for my brother, who I knew would come to bid me good-night. He came; we had our last fireside talk in my girlhood's home; and when he left me there was an incursion of all my bridesmaids for a "dressing-gown reception."

When at last I was alone I drew back the curtain and curled myself up on the low wide window-seat. The moon was at its brightest; the little church and quiet churchyard beyond the lawn looked fair and calm beneath its rays; the gleam of the white headstones here and there between the trees might have reminded me that life is not all peace and joy—that tears and pain, fear and parting, have their share in its story—but it did not. The tranquil happiness with which my heart was full overflowed in some soft tears which had no tinge of bitterness, and when at last I did lie down, peace, deep and perfect, still seemed to flow in on me with the moonbeams which filled the room, shimmering on the folds of my bridal dress, which was laid ready for the morning. I am thus minute in describing my last waking moments, that it may be understood that what followed was not creation of a morbid fancy.

I do not know how long I had been asleep, when I was suddenly, as it were, wrenched back to consciousness. The moon had set, the room was quite dark; I could just distinguish the glimmer of a clouded, starless sky through the open window. I could not see or hear anything unusual, but not the less was I conscious of an unwonted, a baleful presence near; an indescribable horror cramped the very beatings of my heart; with every instant the certainty grew that my room was shared by some evil being. I could not cry for help, though Archie's room was so close, and I knew that one call through the death-like stillness would bring him to me; all I could do was to gaze, gaze, gaze into the

darkness. Suddenly—and a throb stung through every nerve—I heard distinctly from behind the wainscot against which the head of my bed was placed a low, hollow moan, followed on the instant by a cackling, malignant laugh from the other side of the room. If I had been one of the monumental figures in the little churchyard on which I had seen the quiet moonbeams shine a few hours before I could not have been more utterly unable to move or speak; every other faculty seemed to be lost in the one intent strain of eye and ear. There came at last the sound of a halting step, the tapping of a crutch upon the floor, then stillness, and slowly, gradually the room filled with light—a pale, cold, steady light. Everything around was exactly as I had last seen it in the mingled shine of the moon and fire, and though I heard at intervals the harsh laugh, the curtain at the foot of the bed hid from me whatever uttered it. Again, low but distinct, the piteous moan broke forth, followed by some words in a foreign tongue, and with the sound a figure started from behind the curtain—a dwarfed, deformed woman, dressed in a loose robe of black, sprinkled with golden stars, which gave forth a dull, fiery gleam, in the mysterious light; one lean, yellow hand clutched the curtain of my bed; it glittered with jeweled rings;—long black hair fell in heavy masses from a golden circlet over the stunted form. I saw it all clearly as I now see the pen which writes these words and the hand which guides it. The face was turned from me, bent aside, as if greedily drinking in those astonished moans; I noted even the streaks of gray in the long tresses, as I lay helpless in dumb, bewildered horror.

“Again!” she said hoarsely, as the sounds died away into indistinct murmurs, and advancing a step she tapped sharply

with a crutch on the cedar wainscot; then again louder and more purposeful rose the wild beseeching voice; this time the words were English.

“Mercy, have mercy! not on me, but on my child, my little one; she never harmed you. She is dying—she is dying here in darkness; let me but see her face once more. Death is very near, nothing can save her now; but grant one ray of light, and I will pray that you may be forgiven, if forgiveness there be for such as you.”

“What, you kneel at last! Kneel to Gerda, and kneel in vain. A ray of light! Not if you could pay for it in diamonds. You are mine! Shriek and call as you will, no other ears can hear. Die together. You are mine to torture as I will; mine, mine, mine!” and again an awful laugh rang through the room. At the instant she turned. O the face of malign horror that met my gaze! The green eyes flamed, and with something like the snarl of a savage beast she sprang toward me; that hideous face almost touched mine; the grasp of the skinny jeweled hand was all but on me; then—I suppose I fainted.

For weeks I lay in brain fever, in mental horror and weariness so intent, that even now I do not like to let my mind dwell on it. Even when the crisis was safely past I was slow to rally; my mind was utterly unstrung. I lived in a world of shadows. And so winter wore by, and brought us to the fair spring morning when at last I stood by Robert's side in the old church, a cold, passive, almost unwilling bride. I cared neither to refuse nor consent to anything that was suggested; so Robert and Archie decided for me, and I allowed them to do with me as they would, while I brooded silently and ceaselessly on the memory of that terrible night. To my husband I told all one morning in a

sunny Bavarian valley, and my weak, frightened mind drew strength and peace from his; by degrees the haunting horror wore away, and when we came home for a happy reason nearly two years afterward, I was as strong and blithe as in my girlhood. I had learned to believe that it had all been, not the cause, but the commencement of my fever. I was to be undeceived.

Our little daughter had come to us in the time of roses; and now Christmas was with us, our first Christmas at home, and the house was full of guests. It was a delicious old-fashioned Yule; plenty of skating and outdoor fun, and no lack of brightness indoors. Toward New Year a heavy fall of snow set in which kept us all prisoners; but even then the days flew merrily, and somebody suggested tableaux for the evenings. Robert was elected manager; there was a debate and selection of subjects, and then came the puzzle of where, at such short notice, we could procure the dresses required. My husband advised a raid on some mysterious oaken chests which he knew had been for years stowed away in a turret-room. He remembered having, when a boy, seen the housekeeper inspecting them, and their contents had left a hazy impression of old stand-alone brocades, gold tissues, sacques, hoops, and hoods, the very mention of which put us in a state of wild excitement. Mrs. Moultrie was summoned, looked duly horrified at the desecration of what to her were relics most sacred; but seeing it was inevitable, she marshaled the way, a protest in every rustle and fold of her stiff silk dress.

“What a charming old place,” was the exclamation with variations as we entered the long oak-joisted room, at the further end of which stood in goodly array the chests whose contents we coveted. Bristling with unspoken disapproval,

poor Mrs. Moultrie unlocked one after another, and then asked permission to retire, leaving us unchecked to "cry havoc." In a moment the floor was covered with piles of silks and velvets.

"Meg," cried little Janet Crawford, dancing up to me, "isn't it a good thing to live in the age of tulle and summer silks? Fancy being imprisoned for life in a fortress like this!" holding up a thick crimson and gold brocade, whale-boned and buckramed at all points. It was thrown aside, and she half lost herself in another chest and was silent. Then—"Look, Major Fraude! This is the very thing for you—a true astrologer's robe, all black velvet and golden stars. If it were but long enough; it just fits me."

I turned and saw—the pretty slight figure, the innocent girlish face dressed in the robe of black and gold, identical in shape, pattern and material with what I too well remembered. With a wild cry I hid my face and cowered away.

"Take it off! O, Janet—Robert—take it from her!"

Every one turned wondering. In an instant my husband saw, and catching up the cause of my terror, flung it hastily into the chest again, and lowered the lid. Janet looked half offended, but the cloud passed in an instant when I kissed her, apologizing as well as I could. Rob laughed at us both, and voted an adjournment to a warmer room, where we could have the chests brought to us to ransack at leisure. Before going down, Janet and I went into a small anteroom to examine some old pictures which leaned against the wall.

"This is just the thing, Jennie, to frame the tableaux," I said, pointing to an immense frame, at least twelve feet square. "There is a picture in it," I added, pulling back the dusty folds of a heavy curtain which fell before it.

"That can be easily removed," said my husband, who had followed us.

With his assistance we drew the curtain quite away, and in the now fast waning light could just discern the figure of a girl in white against a dark background. Robert rang for a lamp, and when it came we turned with much curiosity to examine the painting, as to the subject of which we had been making odd merry guesses while we waited. The girl was young, almost childish—very lovely, but, oh, how sad! Great tears stood in the innocent eyes and on the round young cheeks, and her hands were clasped tenderly around the arms of a man who was bending toward her, and, did I dream?—no, there in hateful distinctness was the hideous woman of the Cedar Closet—the same in every distorted line, even to the starred dress and golden circlet. The swarthy hues of the dress and face had at first caused us to overlook her. The same wicked eyes seemed to glare into mine. After one wild bound my heart seemed to stop its beating, and I knew no more. When I recovered from a long, deep swoon, great lassitude and intense nervous excitement followed; my illness broke up the party, and for months I was an invalid. When again Robert's love and patience had won me back to my old health and happiness, he told me all the truth, so far as it had been preserved in old records of the family.

It was in the sixteenth century that the reigning lady of Draye Court was a weird, deformed woman, whose stunted body, hideous face, and a temper which taught her to hate and vilify everything good and beautiful for the contrast offered to herself, made her universally feared and disliked. One talent only she possessed; it was for music; but so wild and strange were the strains she drew from the many



instruments of which she was mistress, that the gift only intensified the dread with which she was regarded. Her father had died before her birth; her mother did not survive it; near relatives she had none; she had lived her lonely, loveless life from youth to middle age. When a young girl came to the Court, no one knew more than that she was a poor relation. The dark woman seemed to look more kindly on this young cousin than on any one that had hitherto crossed her somber path, and indeed so great was the charm which Marian's goodness, beauty and innocent gayety exercised on every one that the servants ceased to marvel at her having gained the favor of their gloomy mistress. The girl seemed to feel a kind of wondering, pitying affection for the unhappy woman; she looked on her through an atmosphere created by her own sunny nature, and for a time all went well. When Marian had been at the Court for a year, a foreign musician appeared on the scene. He was a Spaniard, and had been engaged by Lady Draye to build for her an organ said to be of fabulous power and sweetness. Through long bright summer days he and his employer were shut up together in the music-room—he busy in the construction of the wonderful instrument, she aiding and watching his work. These days were spent by Marian in various ways—pleasant idleness and pleasant work, long canters on her chestnut pony, dreamy mornings by the brook with rod and line, or in the village near, where she found a welcome everywhere. She played with the children, nursed the babies, helped the mothers in a thousand pretty ways, gossiped with old people, brightening the day for everybody with whom she came in contact. Then in the evening she sat with Lady Draye and the Spaniard in the saloon, talking in that soft foreign tongue which they

generally used. But this was but the music between the acts; the terrible drama was coming. The motive was of course the same as that of every life drama which has been played out from the old, old days when the curtain rose upon the garden scene of Paradise. Philip and Marian loved each other, and having told their happy secret to each other, they, as in duty bound, took it to their patroness. They found her in the music room. Whether the glimpses she caught of a beautiful world from which she was shut out maddened her, or whether she, too, loved the foreigner, was never certainly known; but through the closed door passionate words were heard, and very soon Philip came out alone, and left the house without a farewell to any in it. When the servants did at last venture to enter, they found Marian lifeless on the floor, Lady Draye standing over her with crutch uplifted, and blood flowing from a wound in the girl's forehead. They carried her away and nursed her tenderly; their mistress locked the door as they left, and all night long remained alone in darkness. The music which came out without pause on the still night air was weird and wicked beyond any strains which had ever before flowed even from beneath her fingers; it ceased with morning light; and as the day wore on it was found that Marian had fled during the night, and that Philip's organ had sounded its last strain—Lady Draye had shattered and silenced it forever. She never seemed to notice Marian's absence and no one dared to mention her name. Nothing was ever known certainly of her fate; it was supposed that she had joined her lover.

Years passed, and with each Lady Draye's temper grew fiercer and more malevolent. She never quitted her room unless on the anniversary of that day and night, when the

tapping of her crutch and high-heeled shoes was heard for hours as she walked up and down the music-room, which was never entered save for this yearly vigil. The tenth anniversary came round, and this time the vigil was not unshared. The servants distinctly heard the sound of a man's voice mingling in earnest conversation with her shrill tones; they listened long, and at last one of the boldest ventured to look in, himself unseen. He saw a worn, traveled-stained man; dusty, foot-sore, poorly dressed, he still at once recognized the handsome, gay Philip of ten years ago. He held in his arms a little sleeping girl; her long curls, so like poor Marian's, strayed over his shoulder. He seemed to be pleading in that strange musical tongue for the little one; for as he spoke he lifted, O, so tenderly, the cloak which partly concealed her, and showed the little face, which he doubtless thought might plead for itself. The woman, with a furious gesture, raised her crutch to strike the child; he stepped quickly backward, stooped to kiss the little girl, then, without a word, turned to go. Lady Draye called on him to return with an imperious gesture, spoke a few words, to which he seemed to listen gratefully, and together they left the house by the window which opened on the terrace. The servants followed them, and found she led the way to the parsonage, which was at the time unoccupied. It was said that he was in some political danger as well as in deep poverty, and that she had hidden him here until she could help him to a better asylum. It was certain that for many nights she went to the parsonage and returned before dawn, thinking herself unseen. But one morning she did not come home; her people consulted together; her relenting toward Philip had made them feel more kindly toward her than ever before; they sought her at the parson-

age and found her lying across its threshold dead, a vial clasped in her rigid fingers. There was no sign of the late presence of Philip and his child; it was believed she had sped them on their way before she killed herself. They laid her in a suicide's grave. For more than fifty years after the parsonage was shut up. Though it had been again inhabited no one had ever been terrified by the specter I had seen; probably the Cedar Closet had never before been used as a bedroom.

Robert decided on having the wing containing the haunted room pulled down and rebuilt, and in doing so the truth of my story gained a horrible confirmation. When the wainscot of the Cedar Closet was removed a recess was discovered in the massive old wall, and in this lay moldering fragments of the skeletons of a man and child!

There could be but one conclusion drawn; the wicked woman had imprisoned them there under pretense of hiding and helping them; and once they were completely at her mercy, had come night after night with unimaginable cruelty to gloat over their agony, and, when that long anguish was ended, ended her odious life by a suicide's death. We could learn nothing of the mysterious painting. Philip was an artist, and it may have been his work. We had it destroyed, so that no record of the terrible story might remain. I have no more to add, save that but for those dark days left by Lady Draye as a legacy of fear and horror, I should never have known so well the treasure I hold in the tender, unwearying, faithful love of my husband—known the blessing that every sorrow carries in its heart, that

“Every cloud that spreads above  
And veileth love, itself is love.”

# GIGLAMPZ!

“For of all sad words of tongue or pen  
The saddest are these—‘It might have been.’”

## CHAPTER I.—HOW O’PHARNEY PROPOSED TO EDUCATE THE NATION

The vanity of human hopes, the folly of human ambition, and the general perversity of human nature, are well exemplified in the history of that ephemeral bantling of artistic and journalistic enterprise, *The Giglampz, Devoted to Art, Literature, and Satire*; and founded by our brilliantly-facetious, dashingly-unconventional, and abnormally-intellectual Bohemian paragon, H. F. O’Pharney. Born in the fatherland of our most famous modern artists, H. F. O’Pharney inherited in a large degree the virtues and excellencies of Alsatian character, with but few of its vices and all of its æsthetic genius. His remote ancestors were the fierce and gigantic feudal barons of old, and in his veins coursed warmly the blood of a race of soldiers. Like Saul of old, he was “a choice young man and a goodly”; and the fair ladies of Cincinnati desired no higher bliss than to bask in the sunshine of his smile. Wedded, however, to his art, with a passionate love, whereof only the most lofty minds are capable, he noted not their idolatry, and dreamed only of developing the æsthetic taste of the human race. In the formation of his plans for this mighty end, he asked no advice, sought no counsel. “For it has ever been my

maxim from childhood's hour," he was wont to exclaim, "to follow the inclinations of my peculiar intellect, to pursue the promptings of my genius, without regard to the wishes or the will of those who pestered me with their senseless suggestions."

Finally the great pregnant mind brought forth its mighty idea for the amelioration of the human intellect. Art and literature combined could alone effect the grand object, and the most efficient combination of these could best be wielded as agents of universal instruction in the column of a well-conducted illustrated journal. But philanthropy is emasculated by poverty, and our brilliant and bland Bohemian, like all his brethren, lacked filthy lucre. Yet the inexhaustible fertility of his genius, the irresistible magnetism of his manner, the incontrovertible logic of his arguments and the intensity of his persuasive eloquence soon supplied the deficiency. A moderately wealthy but wonderfully enterprising Hebrew publishing firm agreed to found an illustrated journal, to hire an editor and to remunerate the Bohemian artist for his labors—not as a recompense for his philanthropy, for philanthropy scorns pecuniary compensation, but merely "for time lost" in the education of the human race. For reasons which it might not be pleasing to our readers to learn, the periodical was published in German, and entitled the *Kladderadatsch*. The birthday of the *Kladderadatsch* was—ah! let it remain unrecorded; let us not provoke cruel memory further; let us remember all the other breasts that would ache. *De mortuis nihil nisi bonum*. Let us say naught even of that brilliant and brief existence, expecting the bitter and brief maternity and the death in child-bed.

CHAPTER II.—HOW O'PHARNEY ACTED AS  
ACCOUCHEUR AND GOD-FATHER

Messrs. Austerlitz and Honthum, the parents of *Kladderadatsch*, were not altogether satisfied with the health of their offspring. *Kladderadatsch* was suffering evidently from want of that literary nourishment which it was the material duty of Honthum to furnish—a want which the intellectual poverty of Honthum and the intellectual and financial poverty of Austerlitz rendered unavoidable, consequently the prospective birth of an English journal was looked forward to by Him of the Warlike Appellation with no little anxiety. Beneath the cheerful words of encouragement proffered by the General Practitioner, O'Pharney, however, this anxiety gradually resolved itself into a dreadful resignation. "Would to God," fervently exclaimed the enthusiastic O'Pharney, "that I were as well assured of a felicitous matrimonial alliance at some far remote period of my chequered career, as I am that the new journal will be not only successful, but unprecedentedly, abnormally successful." Finally, after a terrific six-weeks' labor, the new journal of thrice-accursed memory to every one connected with it, was brought into the world by the skillful midwifery of the great O'Pharney. Long and loud were the deliberations of the friends of the enterprise, as the nomenclature of the Journal with the Great Future, *The Sphinx*, *The Inquisitor*, *The Owl*, *The Bat*, *The Djinn*, *The Cartoonist*—were all successively considered upon and successively abandoned. Finally O'Pharney resolved in the might of his unconquerable will, that the new paper be called *The Giglampz*; and it was so christened, despite all protestation. The name needs

interpretation to the polite-spoken American nation. It signifieth "spectacles"—spectacles of a huge and owlish description—just such spectacles as sat upon the intellectual nose of the myopic editor <sup>1</sup> [No. 1] who furnished the new-born paper with literary fodder.

CHAPTER III.—HOW AN ENQUIRER REPORTER  
"ACCEPTED A POSITION ON THE *The Giglampz*"

Now, in those days there was a young man <sup>1</sup> connected with the *Daily Enquirer* whose tastes were whimsically grotesque and arabesque. He was by nature a fervent admirer of extremes. He believed only in the Revoltingly Horrible or the Excruciatingly Beautiful. He worshiped the French school of sensation, and reveled in thrusting a reeking mixture of bones, blood and hair under people's noses at breakfast time. To produce qualms in the stomachs of other people affords him especial delight. To borrow the picturesque phraseology of Jean Paul Richter, his life-path was ever running down into vaults and out over graves. He was only known to fame by the name of "The Ghoul."

Such was the being to whose manifold genius the appreciative O'Pharney resolved to intrust the destinies of *The Giglampz*. It happened that in days gone by the Ghoul had written for a certain very weakly periodical a long review of the great artist's most famous etching. That review exemplified the Agony of Æsthetics. But the mammoth-souled O'Pharney felt grateful for the frantic effort, and appointed the Ghoul editor of *The Giglampz*, at a salary of \$— per week, to be paid from the pocket of E. H. Austerlitz. So the Ghoul agreed to furnish *The Giglampz*

<sup>1</sup> This reference is to Hearn himself. The editor.



with fun during the day and hunt up horrors for the *Enquirer* during the night.

The Ghoul commenced his labors under inauspicious circumstances. *The Giglampz* had no sinking fund, no subscription list, no subscribers, no advertisers, no exchanges, no canvassing agents, no business management. "It matters not," placidly observed the sanguine O'Pharney; *The Giglampz* must live wholly upon its intrinsic merits, not upon the charity of this unæsthetic commercial mart. We must not beg for subscribers; we must compel them to take the paper. We must not pander to public taste, but educate the public mind up to our stand-point. We must not request to be appreciated, but compel the nation to appreciate despite of themselves." The Ghoul internally admired this tremendous display of self-confidence, although he remained altogether at a loss to conceive either how chameleons could live wholly upon air or newspapers wholly upon their merits. Nor has his subsequent experience upon *The Giglampz* tended to render the problem less inexplicable.

#### CHAPTER IV.—HOW *The Giglampz* LIVED

##### "WHOLLY UPON ITS MERITS"

We will not touch upon the episode of the wonderfully-witty prospectus conceived by the fertile brain of O'Pharney, and written by the Ghoul, save to say that it played the part of precursor by procuring local notices in several daily papers regarding the prospective appearance of *The Giglampz*.

There had been a marvelous amount of discussion and disquisition as to the policy and tone to be adopted by *The Giglampz*, but the journal was born before any very definite conclusion had been arrived at, excepting that it was to be devoted to art, literature and satire, and to be ex-

cruciatingly funny without descending to coarseness or salacity. The diabolical recklessness of the Ghoul in the latter lines of fancy writing being more or less notorious, O'Pharney presented him with an ancient and dog-eared volume of *Punch*, published in the early days of Thackeray's literary career, and bade him "seek ideas" therein, and modulate his tone to the chaste spirit of the London *Charivari*. The Ghoul observed that he much preferred the tone of the Paris *Charivari*, but endeavored nevertheless to obey instructions. He failed to find any ideas, however, in *Punch*, except the idea that it was heavily virtuous enough to give an *Enquirer* sensationalist the headache. Under the circumstances he saw nothing for it but to write the whole number from imagination, and according to his conception of the highest order of humor. Accordingly, *The Giglampz* appeared on the 21st day of June, with five satirical articles concerning the Crusaders, the English Government, Spiritualism, the Western Associated Press, and Colonel George Ward Nichols. A specimen sheet of literary advertisements, a picture of Kladderadatsch introducing Giglampz into the world, and a political cartoon representing the United States in the garb of Rip Van Winkle, completed the attractions of the first issue.

The first issue of *The Giglampz* cost about sixty dollars. The receipts of sales amounted to *one dollar and seventy-seven cents*. The sun of Austerlitz seemed to have set forever.

It was unanimously resolved at a secret meeting of the staff that the merits of *The Giglampz* were not yet sufficiently substantial to live upon. They said it was "too heavy." The Ghoul said he had been reading *Punch*. Then they said it was not at all funny. The Ghoul

thought otherwise—he thought it was extremely funny, but that the æsthetic taste of the American people had not yet been sufficiently developed to comprehend and appreciate fun of so high an order. But Austerlitz observed that the first number was too religious, and the Ghoul subsided. That night the editor of the *Enquirer* observed that *The Giglampz* could not hope for success as a funny paper, in view of the fact that the dailies enjoyed their usual health; and the newsboys, being interviewed by an enterprising reporter, stated that they had determined to sell “neither of the comic papers—the *Gazette* or *The Giglampz*.” And when the Ghoul heard these things he became smitten with remorse of conscience, and bade Austerlitz deduct two dollars from his week’s salary. So far the public taste had failed to show susceptibility to cultivation and “development of a high order”; and the Solomonic O’Pharney commenced to perceive that *The Giglampz* must have something besides its merits to live upon.

#### CHAPTER V.—HOW *The Giglampz* RECEIVED

##### A LARGE TRANSFUSION OF BLOOD

A solemn cabinet council was next day held to decide upon the course to be adopted in this momentous emergency; and the following resolutions were adopted after a long and stormy deliberation:

“Resolved, On motion of Mr. O’Pharney (1), that the merits of *The Giglampz* were of too high an order to be appreciated in this unæsthetic commercial mart.

“2. That *The Giglampz* could not therefore live wholly upon its merits.

“3. That a minion be hired on commission to solicit the charity of this unæsthetic commercial mart.”

[Mr. Austerlitz ventured to observe that no minion worthy of the name would consent to work wholly upon commission for *The Giglampz*. Neither *The Giglampz* nor its minion, he thought, could live wholly upon their merits—especially the minion. He had hired a minion who had brought in a promise of two subscriptions after a week's work; and that minion had been instantaneously discharged. But he did not believe *The Giglampz* as at present situated, could live either upon its own merits or upon the merits of minions. There was no use in obtaining subscriptions or advertisements, since the paper "vos goin' to burst up," and ——. Here the wrathful O'Pharney terrified him into silence.]

Upon motion of the Ghoul, it was resolved that—

"WHEREAS, the public cannot comprehend or appreciate so lofty an order of humor as that which toned the first number of *The Giglampz*, therefore strenuous efforts shall be made to convince the said public that the said *Giglampz* is not a funny paper."

The Ghoul likewise intimated that he needed assistance in the editorial department; and resolutions were passed to the effect that contributions be purchased at low rates. The services of Joseph Archibald Joyce, who proposed to furnish *The Giglampz* with gratuitous fun, were respectfully declined. But the Ghoul observed that he could obtain the assistance of a brother reporter on the *Enquirer*, the variety of whose literary tastes were only equaled by their luxuriant richness, whose reliability and energy in the pursuit of news were superhuman, and who was altogether a perfect paragon of elegance, fashion, and *savoir-faire*. The Paragon was immediately offered a position on the editorial staff of *The Giglampz*, and was not loath to accept it. The position was at first a subordinate one, but its occupant rose in the world

before *The Giglampz* departed this life, as shall hereafter be perceived.

CHAPTER VI.—How *The Kladderadatsch* DIED,  
AND *The Giglampz* FELL INTO A TRANCE

The Ghoul finally resolved to spring French sensation upon the public. Sensation, he had frequently observed, was the only species of literature that the public would appreciate and pay for. But as the prime object of the establishment of *The Giglampz* was to educate the public taste, ordinary sensation must be eschewed. The French school of sensation, embodying the extremes of horror and the agony of æsthetics, was the highest order of sensation, and might therefore be improvised into a medium of education. So the Ghoul produced a series of translations from Charivari, and a succession of elaborately florid fantasies, and hopefully awaited the result. What the result upon the public might have been was never known, but the immediate result was that the paper ran short of matter that week. O'Pharney seeing the proof sheets, declared that the Ghoul was pandering to depraved tastes, and ordered the Ghoul's articles to be in part distributed. The remainder he "corrected," with what he styled "emendations and embellishments" of his own. The Ghoul thought both the literary tastes and the English of the critical O'Pharney susceptible of vast improvement; but as O'Pharney threatened to draw no more cartoons for *The Giglampz* in case the Ghoul was allowed to have his own way, there was no help for it. But the Ghoul sent in his resignation.

However, the Anti-temperance folks having agreed to take five hundred *Giglampzes* per week in the interim, as the paper had espoused their cause; and as the cartoon on

the Beecher scandal attracted some attention and helped to sell a good many papers, the Ghoul felt better in a few days, and resolved to help *The Giglampz* a little longer. The next week he recommenced his labors, and produced translations and fantasies of what he believed to be a chaster character. O'Pharney believed otherwise, and declared that only the brain of a Satyr could have conceived ideas so salacious. The Ghoul naturally felt insulted, and offered his resignation for the second time. But on the representation of O'Pharney that the withdrawal of the Ghoul would paralyze *The Giglampz*, the sensational editor curbed his resentment, and let the matter drop. However, the next week, a similar trouble ensued in consequence of an article by the Ghoul, entitled *Fantasies for Summer Seasons, or a Ravishing Picture of Free Love in the Sandwich Islands*.

"Sir," wrathfully exclaimed the unappreciative O'Pharney, "you shall not prostitute MY paper to the indulgence of your abominable fancies; you shall not sacrifice MY paper to your Venus Anadyomene. *The Giglampz* is an organ devoted to art, literature and satire; not to sex-worship and sensation. D—n your lasciviousness; can't you get my idea?"

"Sunday-school paper;" sarcastically observed the Ghoul, "You don't want *The Giglampz* to conform to the public taste, or to the editor's taste. To whose taste, then, pray, is *The Giglampz* to conform?"

"To my taste, sir."

"Then why don't you edit *The Giglampz* yourself? Nobody would read it if you did, anyhow."

"I don't care one straw, sir, whether the public like my taste or not. If the paper cannot live upon my taste it must die—that's all there is about it. I would not sell the

virtue of *The Giglampz* for all the gold in the United States Treasury.”

Then the Ghoul sent in his resignation for a third time; and departed to demand his salary. The Man of the Warlike Appellation thought the Ghoul had not earned his salary, and declined to pay it. But the enraged Ghoul threatened a law suit and a libel-suit and a suit for damages; and the Man of the Warlike Appellation wilted. O’Pharney became seized with a fit of the blue devils, and wrote a grotesque epitaph for *The Giglampz*; and *The Giglampz* went to Limbo.

It rose again from the dead, however, after three days’ sepulture; for the Ghoul, being smitten with remorse of conscience, resolved to resume his duties, although *The Giglampz* had by that time become too poor to pay any salary. However, the Hebrew proprietor of *The Giglampz* was not anxious that the resurrection should take place. He had lost a terrible amount of filthy lucre on the *Kladderadatsch* and *The Giglampz*; and neither of them appeared to have a hopeful future. “Bah!” exclaimed the confident O’Pharney, “what matters filthy lucre? Who ever established a paper without pecuniary loss? Let us kill the *Kladderadatsch*, and compel its subscribers to take *The Giglampz*. I have ever regarded the *Kladderadatsch* but as a Jacob’s Ladder whereon *The Giglampz* shall climb to fame and glory.” And the *Kladderadatsch* died and was buried on the 18th day of June, 1874, its epitaph being published in the *Daily Enquirer* of the 19th, as follows:

KLADDERADATSCH—On the 19th instant, Kladderadatsch, only offspring of E. H. Austerlitz and C. B. Honthum, aged three months, three weeks and three days. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.”

Dearest Kladdy, thou hast busted,  
 And thy death we here deplore;  
 But the creditors who trusted  
 Must lament thy loss much more.

CHAPTER VII.—HOW THE GHOUL PLAYED AT  
 PRODIGAL SON, AND LIVED UPON HUSKS

Now after these things had taken place, *The Giglampz* was resuscitated, and lived through another brief week much as it had lived before, the death of the *Kladderadatsch* not producing any appreciative effect upon the sickly health of its offsprings. Then Austerlitz withdrew his filthy lucre from the treasury of *The Giglampz*, and *The Giglampz* died for the second time. But the brilliant genius of O'Pharney was equal to the emergency. He proposed to the Ghoul to take a half interest in *The Giglampz*. He and the Ghoul could run it together, as the anti-temperance people still guaranteed five hundred subscribers per week, and the *Kladderadatsch* subscribers were receiving *The Giglampz*. So long as they continued to receive it, they would have to pay for it whether they wanted it or not. That was the law, and O'Pharney had the dead wood on them. The cost of the paper, printing and lithographing would not be more than fifty dollars per week, and they could rake that up, anyhow. The Ghoul would receive a salary sufficient to pay his board, which was absolutely necessary, as the editorial duties of *The Giglampz* would thenceforth monopolize his whole time.

Then the Ghoul paid a visit to the City Editor of the *Enquirer*, and handed in his resignation. He said he had at last become independent of the *Enquirer*, and was tired



of local work. Would not work any more for the *Enquirer* upon any consideration. He was at last a self-made man, a partner, a newspaper proprietor. He had a half-share in *The Giglampz*.

Our City Editor sat down and laughed until his ribs threatened to burst asunder, and the tears rolled down his cheeks in torrents. The idea of an *Enquirer* man resigning his position in order to accept an interest in *The Giglampz* was too much for him. When he recovered the use of articulate speech, however, he ironically congratulated the Ghoul on his extraordinary good fortune. Then all the *Enquirer* boys went down to Jake Aug's, and gave the Ghoul an ovation. And the resignation of the Ghoul was accepted.

*The Giglampz* did a little better for the next few weeks, but the Ghoul did a great deal worse. He had no longer any salary to live upon. He had resigned his position on the *Enquirer*; and he never received anything for his services on *The Giglampz*. He was a partner, it was true, and was to become very rich some day on the prospective half-profits of *The Giglampz*. He even dreamed of purchasing a brown-stone front in a year or two. But as the Treasurer, O'Pharney, kept the treasury of *The Giglampz* in his vest pocket; and as there were no accounts whatever kept of receipts and disbursements, the Ghoul could not tell how soon the Golden Age of *The Giglampz* might come. The business management of *The Giglampz* was a mystery to be meditated upon.

For a time the Ghoul lived upon his savings, and then he tried to live upon air. How long he could have managed to live upon air will never be known, owing to a combina-

tion of unpleasant circumstances which changed his plans for the future. He had written two elaborate articles, entitled "The Fantasy of a Fan," and "The Tale a Picture Tells." After a hot fight O'Pharney permitted the second to appear in *The Giglampz* uninjured. The first, however, he declared to be simply disgusting—it smacked too much of Mademoiselle de Maupin. He wanted to rewrite it himself, and "embellish," "amend" and "correct" it. The Ghoul claimed that it was his property, and that rather than have it butchered he would not give it to *The Giglampz* at all. O'Pharney compromised the matter by promising to spoil only one line, which he did most successfully; but the Ghoul sent in his resignation for the fourth time. It was bad enough to live on air, he said, but he said he could not stand having his English mangled. O'Pharney immediately offered the vacant editorship and partnership to Mr. Secundus, the repertorial brother of the Ghoul, and Mr. Secundus accepted it.

Meanwhile the Ghoul wended his way to the *Enquirer* office, expressing deep repentance, and acknowledging his sin, like the Prodigal Son. They killed the fatted calf for him, and kindly reinstated him in his old post. This put the Ghoul into so good a humor, that he resolved to resume his interest in *The Giglampz*, and accept a position as assistant editor.

So in the brief space of nine weeks *The Giglampz* was owned and published by different firms, namely:

E. H. AUSTERLITZ & Co.,  
O'PHARNEY AND THE GHOUL,  
O'PHARNEY AND SECUNDUS,  
O'PHARNEY, SECUNDUS AND THE GHOUL.

CHAPTER VIII.—HOW THE NEW YORK *Herald* WAS  
STRICKEN WITH PARALYSIS BY REASON OF THE  
DEATH OF *The Giglampz*

From time to time, during the next few weeks, the two silent partners were informed by O'Pharney that the health of *The Giglampz* was improving. They had no other means of ascertaining whether it was improving or not, as O'Pharney, who monopolized the whole business management, held that the labor of book-keeping befitted only base minions. Mr. Secundus, being a man of thorough business and wholesome principles, however, insisted that a base minion be hired. This was solemnly agreed to. But before any minion could be found base enough to take charge of the much muddled-up account of *The Giglampz*, *The Giglampz* had fallen into the eternal sleep which is called death.

Now, the New York *Herald* had for some time been exchanging its Weekly with *The Giglampz*, which accounts for the extraordinary brilliancy of the former sheet during the months of June and July; and the proprietors of *The Giglampz*, observing the prodigious improvement in *Herald* literature, began to believe that they had effected a great step at last toward the education of the human race. But at the moment when their hopes were highest a bad stroke of business management knocked *The Giglampz*, like Beecher's *Life of Christ*, higher than a kite. It happened on a Friday, as ill-luck would have it, that O'Pharney conceived "a brilliant stroke of enterprise." The heart-rending Pat Rogers disaster had just taken place, and America was in mourning. O'Pharney determined that *The Giglampz* should be the first to publish illustrations of the catastrophe,

and with that view dispatched a brother artist to the scene of the wreck. The artist returned with a series of sketches taken upon the spot, which were duly published in *The Giglampz*.

The mourning American public failed to see the high artistic merits of these cartoons. It beheld in them only caricatures of its sacred grief. It felt its holiest feelings had been horribly outraged; and all efforts of the proprietors of *The Giglampz* to convince it of the truth failed utterly. That week *The Giglampz* lost five hundred subscribers, and about the same time the anti-temperance people withdrew their patronage. O'Pharney even then had not lost all hope, but his silent partners had. Disgusted with the stupidity of the great American people, *The Giglampz* management and *The Giglampz* itself, both Secundus and the Ghoul declined any further connection with the unlucky paper. And *The Giglampz* died of inanition and the bad taste of the great American people, at the age of nine weeks, on the 16th day of August, 1874.

The death of *The Giglampz* proved to be a serious blow to literary enterprise in the United States, and especially to that of the New York *Herald*. For weeks subsequently its energies drooped, its brilliancy waned, and its subscription list fell off rapidly. It has not yet at all recovered from the shock; and there is a frightful probability that it has received serious internal injuries which will eventually prove fatal.

A complete file of *The Giglampz*—nine numbers—is for sale cheap at this office.

VIOLENT CREMATION  
SATURDAY NIGHT'S HORRIBLE  
CRIME  
A MAN MURDERED AND BURNED  
IN A FURNACE  
THE TERRIBLE VENGEANCE OF  
A FATHER  
ARREST OF THE SUPPOSED  
MURDERERS  
LINKS OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL  
EVIDENCE  
THE PITIFUL TESTIMONY OF A  
TREMBLING HORSE  
SHOCKING DETAILS OF THE  
DIABOLISM  
STATEMENTS AND CARTE DE  
VISITE OF THE ACCUSED

“One woe doth tread upon another’s heel,” so fast they follow. Scarcely have we done recording the particulars of one of the greatest conflagrations that has occurred in our city for years than we are called upon to describe the foulest murder that has ever darkened the escutcheon of our State. A murder so atrocious and so horrible that the soul sickens

at its revolting details—a murder that was probably hastened by the fire; for, though vengeance could be the only prompter of two of the accused murderers,

#### FEAR OF A DREADFUL SECRET

Coming to light may have been partly the impelling motive that urged on the third to the bloody deed, as will be found further along in our story. The scene of the awful deed was H. Freiberg's tannery on Livingston street and Gamble alley, just west of Central avenue, and immediately opposite the ruins of M. Werk & Co.'s candle factory.

#### THE DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Herman Schilling, the murdered man, and Andreas Egner, George Rufer and Frederick Egner, his suspected murderers.

The story, as near as we can obtain it, and divested of unnecessary verbiage, is as follows: Herman Schilling, the deceased, has been employed by Mr. Freiberg for some time, and formerly boarded with the elder Egner, who keeps a saloon and boarding-house at No. 153 Findlay street, on the lot immediately west of the tannery, and connected with it by means of a gate. Egner possessed a daughter Julia, about fifteen years of age, whose morals, from common report, were none of the best, and she and the deceased became very intimate. In fact, so intimate did they become that Schilling was found by the father, late one night,

#### IN HER BEDROOM,

Under circumstances that proved that they were criminally so, and Schilling only escaped the father's vengeance at the time by jumping through the window to the ground and temporary safety. Egner claimed that Schilling had se-

duced his daughter, which charge was denied by the accused, who, while admitting his criminal connection with the girl, alleged that he was not the first or only one so favored. At all events, the girl became pregnant and died at the Hospital on the 6th of August last from cancer of the vulva, being seven months advanced in pregnancy at the time. The same day Egner and his son Frederick attacked Schilling in the tanyard with oak barrel staves, and in all probability would have killed him then and there but for the interposition of bystanders. Schilling had the Egners arrested for this assault and battery and they were tried and convicted before Squire True, each being fined \$50 and costs for the offense, and being held in \$200 bonds to keep the peace toward him for one year. After the trial

#### THE ELDER EGNER SWORE,

In his own bar-room, that he would have Schilling's life for the wrong he had done him, and he has repeated these threats on several occasions since. After the discovery of his criminal intimacy with the girl, Schilling left Egner's house and took his meals thereafter at the house of C. Westenbrock, 126 Finday street, and sleeping in a room in a shed of the tannery. Last Saturday night Schilling left Westenbrock's house about 10 o'clock for his sleeping apartment, and as far as is now known this was the

#### LAST TIME HE WAS SEEN ALIVE

By any one who knew him except his murderers. About half past ten o'clock a stout youth of 16, named John Hollerbach, residing on Central avenue, just above Livingston street, came home and entered his residence by the rear of his yard, opening on Gamble alley. He proceeded to his

room in the back of the second floor of the dwelling, and disrobed for bed. He had scarcely done so when he heard the noise of a violent scuffle, apparently proceeding from the alley back of his house, and hastily donning his garments again he dashed down stairs, to find that the noise came from the stable of the tannery, and knowing Schilling well he called to him in German: "Herman, is that you?" The reply came, "Yes, John. John, John, come and help me, some one is killing me," uttered as if the speaker was being choked or stifled. "Who is it," was the next query. The answer was so indistinct that nothing could be made of it and Hollerbach shouted "Murder, murder, let that man alone or I will come in and shoot you." No response was made to this threat save the

GURGLING NOISE OF THE STRANGLING MAN,

And Hollerbach frightened almost to death, started out the alley and down Livingston street in quest of a policeman. He saw the light of the lantern of the private watchman of Werk's place, but not knowing that he had the power of arrest, so runs the boy's strange story, he did not call his attention to the matter, and after vainly seeking for a policeman on several streets without calling or making any outcry for them, he returned to his room, passing by the stable where the foul deed had been committed, hearing, he thought, a dragging noise as he went by. Upon regaining his room he was afraid to go to sleep, and sat up all night in fear and trembling.

ABOUT SEVEN O'CLOCK YESTERDAY MORNING,

Schilling's boarding boss, Westenbrock, who is also an employee of Mr. Freiberg, came to the grated Gamble alley



gateway of the tannery to groom the horse in the stable. He found the gate locked, and called for Schilling. Of course he received no response, until his repeated calls attracted the attention of Hollerbach, who looked out of his window and said, "I shouldn't wonder if Herman was killed last night." "Come here and climb the gate," said Westebrook. Hollerbach did as desired, and opening the gate admitted his partner. The pair at once found that a dreadful deed of blood had been committed. The stable showed signs of a desperate conflict, being splashed with gore, while a

## SIX-PRONGED PITCHFORK

Standing against its side was smeared with blood and hair, as was a broom and a large stick near by. Traces of blood were found leading from the stable to the door of the boiler-room, a distance of over one hundred feet, and upon examination these traces were found to lead directly to the door of the gas chamber of the furnace. The horror-struck men stood appalled for a moment as the realization of their worst fears burst upon them, and then spread the news with all the speed possible. Messengers were dispatched to the Oliver street Station-house, and Lieutenant Bierbaum arrived on the scene about half-past eight o'clock, accompanied by Officer Knoeppe. It did not take them long to determine that the body of the murdered man had been thrown into the furnace, and, aided by the spectators who had gathered to the scene by hundreds, they dampened the fire with water and then fished for the remains. These were found to consist of the head and a portion of the trunk and intestines, burned to a crisp and beyond recognition. Suspicion at once fell upon the Egners, from the fact that the gate in the fence between the tannery and their yard *was*

*wide open* when Westenbrock and Hollerbach entered the premises.

THEY WERE AT ONCE ARRESTED

And taken to the Oliver street Station-house, where a charge of suspicion of murder was placed against their names. Coroner Maley was notified and responded promptly to the call. No Constable being on the ground, he appointed Samuel Bloom special, and impaneled the following jury: John Cutter, Henry Britt, George Gould, Dennis O'Keefe, John Wessel and B. F. Schott. They adjourned until this morning at nine o'clock, the remains meanwhile being transferred to Habig's undertaking establishment, on West Sixth street. An *Enquirer* reporter visited the establishment some hours later, accompanied by Dr. Maley, and examined all so far discovered of Herman Schilling's charred corpse.

THE HIDEOUS MASS OF REEKING CINDERS,

Despite all the efforts of the brutal murderers to hide their ghastly crime, remain sufficiently intact to bear frightful witness against them.

On lifting the coffin-lid a powerful and penetrating odor, strongly resembling the smell of burnt beef, yet heavier and fouler, filled the room and almost sickened the spectators. But the sight of the black remains was far more sickening. Laid upon the clean white lining of the coffin they rather resembled great shapeless lumps of half-burnt bituminous coal than aught else at the first hurried glance; and only a closer investigation could enable a strong-stomached observer to detect their ghastly character—

masses of crumbling human bones, strung together by half-burnt sinews, or glued one upon another by a hideous adhesion of half-molten flesh, boiled brains and jellied blood mingled with coal. The

#### SKULL HAD BURST LIKE A SHELL

In the fierce furnace-heat; and the whole upper portion seemed as though it had been *blown out* by the steam from the boiling and bubbling brains. Only the posterior portion of the occipital and parietal bones, the inferior and superior maxillary, and some of the face-bones remained—the upper portions of the skull bones being jagged, burnt brown in some spots, and in others charred to black ashes. The brain had all boiled away, save a small wasted lump at the base of the skull about the size of a lemon. It was crisped and still warm to the touch. On pushing the finger through the crisp, the interior felt about the consistency of banana fruit, and the yellow fibers seemed to writhe like worms in the Coroner's hands. The eyes were cooked to bubbled crisps in the blackened sockets, and the bones of the nose were gone, leaving a hideous hole.

So covered were the jaws and lower facial bones with coal, crusted blood and gummy flesh, that the Coroner at first supposed the lower maxillary to have been burned away. On tearing away the frightful skull-mask of mingled flesh and coal and charred gristle, however,

#### THE GRINNING TEETH SHONE GHASTLY WHITE,

And both jaws were found intact. They were set together so firmly that it was found impossible to separate them, without reducing the whole mass to ashes. For so great

had been the heat, that the Coroner was able to crumble one of the upper teeth in his fingers.

Besides the fragments of the skull have been found six ribs of the right side and four of the left; the middle portion of the spinal column; the liver, spleen and kidneys; the pelvic bones; the right and left humerus; the femoral bones, and the tibia and fibula of both legs. The body had burst open at the chest, and the heart and lungs had been entirely consumed. The liver was simply roasted and the kidneys fairly fried. There is a horrible probability that the wretched victim was

FORCED INTO THE FURNACE ALIVE,

And suffered all the agonies of the bitterest death which man can die, while wedged in the flaming flue. His teeth were so terribly clenched that more than one spectator of the hideous skull declared that only the most frightful agony could have set those jaws together. Perhaps, stunned and disabled by the murderous blows of his assailants, the unconscious body of the poor German was forced into the furnace. Perhaps the thrusts of the assassin's pitchfork, wedging him still further into the fiery hell, or perhaps the first agony of burning when his bloody garments took fire, revived him to meet the death of flame. Fancy the shrieks for mercy, the mad expostulation, the frightful fight for life, the superhuman struggles for existence—a century of agony crowded into a moment—the shrieks growing feebler—the desperate struggles dying into feeble writhings. And through all the grim murderers, demoniacally pitiless, devilishly desperate, gasping with their exertions to destroy a poor human life,

## LOOKING ON IN SILENT TRIUMPH!

Peering into the furnace until the skull exploded and the steaming body burst, and the fiery flue hissed like a hundred snakes! It may not be true—we hope for poor humanity's sake it cannot be true; but the frightful secrets of that fearful night are known only to the criminals and their God. They may be brought to acknowledge much; but surely never so much as that we have dared to hint at.

## A FRESH TRAIL.

Immediately after the arrest of the Egners the police got news that a man named George Rufer, who had been employed in the tannery, had been discharged Saturday evening, and that he had blamed Schilling for his dismissal. Search was made for him at his residence, No. 90 Logan street, but that he had gone out, and his wife, in response to questions, at first stated that he had not left the house after supper. Afterward she convicted herself, saying that he had gone to Spring street, to a friend's house, in company with her, and that he had retired at 10 o'clock.

The news of the terrible affair spread with great celerity, and though its horrible features seemed too awful for belief, for once a story passed through a dozen lips without gathering anything by the transition,

## REALITY FOR ONCE DISTANCING

The most fervid imagination. By noon the streets in the vicinity of the scene were thronged with people who eagerly caught at the slightest word dropped by any one conversant with the story of the murder, and repeated it with

bated breath to fresh groups of earnest listeners. The day was fine, and in the afternoon hundreds who visited the locality merely to view the ruins of the fire learned of the still more terrible affair, and aided in swelling the crowd that

#### SWAYED TO AND FRO

Around the tannery like waves of the sea. About half past four o'clock the rain, which had been threatening for some time, began to descend in a lively manner, and this dispersed the throng, much to the relief of the police on guard around the premises.

About five o'clock Lieutenant Birnbaum started out on a fresh search for Rufer. Before he reached his residence, however, he found him on his way to the Station-house, he having been arrested by officers Paulus and Knoeppe at the corner of Logan and Finlay streets. When taken to the station-house he was confronted by Colonel Kiersted, who ordered him to be stripped and examined. His face was scratched and contused in a terrible manner, and presented every appearance of his having been engaged in

#### A FEARFUL AND PROLONGED STRUGGLE.

He appeared cool and collected, considering the fearful nature of the suspicion against him. His clothing did not present any traces of blood until he had removed his pantaloons; then the knees of his drawers were found

#### STIFFENED WITH GORE.

He quickly exclaimed: "That is blood from the hides I handled." A gout of blood was also found on the breast of his undershirt.

## HIS STORY

Was told partly in broken English and partly in German, and was substantially as follows: "Last Saturday night Mr. Freiberg told me that work was slack, and that he would have to let me go for a few days. Well, after supper I took my little child and I went down to Mr. Egner's and I had a glass of beer, and then I paid Mr. Egner my beer-bill. After I had had a couple of more beers, about nine o'clock, I took my child and started home. I stopped at a frame grocery at the corner of Logan and Findlay and took a couple of glasses more of beer and one of wine, and then I went to bed. Sunday morning I got up about 7 o'clock and after breakfast I started to walk to Columbia to see the superintendent of a furniture factory there about getting a job of work. I could not find the superintendent, as two men told me he lived over the river. I met no one in Columbia that I knew, and I started to walk home after getting some beer. I got tired, and got into the street cars and rode to the Elm street depot and then started home, when I was arrested. I did not have any trouble with Schilling. I last saw him dressing hides when I left the tannery Saturday evening. He had been in the habit of working at night. I did not know where he slept. I once heard Egner talking about Schilling and his daughter Julia's seduction, and he said that Schilling ought to be

## RUN THROUGH WITH A PITCHFORK.

Another time I heard the son Fred talking about the same thing, and he said that Schilling ought to have a rope tied around his neck and be

## HELD OVER THE HOT FURNACE."

When asked how he accounted for the scratches on his face, he became contradictory, first saying that he got them by jumping from a shed the night of the fire at Werk's factory, then that he refused to give his wife any money Saturday night, and that she and him had a fight, and that she had torn his face with her nails, and again that he had fallen down on the street. He is a man about five feet seven inches high, with a sinewy and strong frame, and is about thirty seven years old. Our portrait<sup>1</sup> is a fair reproduction of his appearance last night in his cell at the Station-house.

The most damning report against him is that the deceased, Herman Schilling, was cognizant of the fact that

## "RUFER HAD SET FIRE"

To M. Werk & Co.'s candle factory Friday night last, and that he intended to apprise the police of his information. How true this report is we cannot now state, but if true it would afford conclusive evidence of the reason that inclined him to share in the deep damnation of the murder.

## THE ELDER EGNER

Is a German, about forty-three years old, slight and spare in figure, and with a forbidding but determined look. His son is a beardless boy, without any distinguishing characteristics save a sullen look of stolid indifference to his fate. His tale is that he played "tag," "catcher," etc., up till nine o'clock Saturday night, slept soundly during the night, hearing no noise, and awakening at seven o'clock in the morning, and only hearing of the murder about eight o'clock.

<sup>1</sup> The portrait in the paper was drawn by Farny. The editor.



Egner keeps a coffee-house and a cooper-shop, just west of the tannery, his saloon being at No. 153 Findley street.

#### THE DECEASED,

Herman Schilling, was a native of Westphalia, twenty-five years old, about five feet eight inches high, finely proportioned, ruddy-faced, with dark mustache and cross-eyes. He was generally spoken of yesterday evening as a very good, companionable kind of a man. He was unmarried, and has no relations that we could learn of in this city.

#### THE PREMISES

On which the bloody deed was enacted comprise a table, harness, carriage and sleeping-room of the deceased, together with two large tan-bark sheds and a boiler shed, in which is situated the furnace wherein Schilling was cremated. The stable adjoins Gamble alley, and is about eight by ten feet square, with a loft not much higher than a man's head. It is occupied by but one horse, and presents every indication of a terrible and bloody struggle. Adjoining it is a room used for storing harness, and it is probable that in this room the murderers laid in wait for their prey. Next, west, is the carriage room; and, by means of a door in its west partition, access is had to the room used by the deceased as his sleeping apartment. These rooms form an offset to the tan-bark sheds, and west of these is the boiler, furnace and engine rooms. Between these buildings and the others of the tannery is a large yard running east and west. To guard the premises are three immense and savage mastiffs.

#### THE MANNER OF THE MURDER.

Judging by all the evidence the murderers were familiar

with the premises and its canine guardians; for, were they not, they could not have gained access to them without encountering the dogs, and being probably torn into fragments by them. They in all probability entered through the gate leading from Egner's to the tanyard, and ensconced themselves in the harness-room, which they knew their victim must pass on his way to his lodging. When he entered, as was his wont, by the small gate opening on Gamble alley, they were peering through the open door of the harness-room awaiting their opportunity. A few more steps in the darkness and silence, and the watchman's throat is suddenly seized with a grasp of iron. Then commences

#### THE TERRIBLE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE.

The night is pitch dark, fit gloom for the dark deed it veils. The victim is a young and powerful man, muscled like Hercules; but he has been wholly taken by surprise, he is unarmed, and he finds by the strength of the grasp on his throat that his antagonist is more than a match for him in mere brute force. A stunning blow from behind suddenly shows him that he has two enemies to deal with; and then for the first time, perhaps, the terrible knowledge of the fact that his life is sought, first dawns upon him. Then indeed it became a fierce fight for dear life. The stable shows that the victim, despairing of his ability to cope with his savage assailants, sought refuge behind the horse's hoofs: hoping at least to thus gain a moment's time to shriek for help. But here the indications are that the contest was hottest. The side of the stable is in places deeply indented by the prongs of the pitchfork—indented by such thrusts as only immense force could give—thrusts which were designed to let out the life of the victim. It was

the noise of this struggle that attracted the attention of young Hollerbach, and—who knows?—but that his version of what he saw and heard of it has yet to be told in full. Certainly it seems singular that he should behave himself in the remarkable manner he states. At the hour he names as the time of the murder a dozen saloons in the immediate vicinity were in full blast and filled with patrons. Aye, even the house in which he slept—no, did not sleep, but watched—has a bar-room in it, which kept open until after midnight, and volunteers to rescue the victim could have been obtained by scores. Mr. John Hollerbach evidently knows much more than he has told of this fearful crime. It is preposterous to think that any man in his sane mind would act as he says he did. When the life of the dying man had so far ebbed that he could no longer resist his fate his murderers thought of the best place to dispose of the body,

#### THE FURNACE.

Within a hundred feet of the stable is the boiler-room, and this boiler is heated by a furnace of peculiar construction, being built on the principle of an air furnace for melting iron. Its fuel is tanbark, emptied in a grate through two circular openings in its top, and provided with a brick flue through which its gases pass into a chamber underneath the boiler where they are ignited. Into this chamber is a square damper opening of about twelve inches across, and to this narrow door the victim was carried by his slayers. The fire in the furnace had been dampened down, but the villains know well its mechanism, and, forcing the body through the narrow door, they endeavor to push it through into the flue. In this, however, they were

balked by its size, and their next work was to arrange the furnace so that its fire would burn the remains to ashes. How well they succeeded our story has told.

#### THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE

Is all as yet there is to found a suspicion on, but we must say that it appears to be of the most conclusive kind. Especially is this the fact in the case of Andreas Egner.

The grimy boards forming the floor of the loft of the stable are covered with festoons of heavy cobwebs; and through the chinks hay-seed has been constantly drifting down and lodging in the glutinous film spun by the gray spiders below. Moreover, the floor of the stable is thickly covered with poplar shavings. Suspicion being once fastened upon Andreas Egner, search was made in his house for articles of clothing or other things which might serve as a clue for tracing up the crime. A bundle of clothes was one of the first things pounced upon, including an old hat, a pair of low shoes, and a well-worn pair of coarse cassimere pants. The pants bore great stains of candle-grease, but there were no stains of blood, although some strange dark spots warranted a keen investigation. Yet the other garments afforded terrible witness against him. His hat was found to be covered with just such cobwebs and hay-seed as hung from the roof of the stable; and his shoes were found full of the very poplar shavings which covered the stable-floor.

Rufer's clothes, which are also in the hands of the police, afford only

#### THE EVIDENCE OF BLOOD,

But there is plenty of it. It has stained the bosom of his coarse checked shirt a muddy red. It has trickled in thick

streams upon the legs of his jeans, and stained them dark below the knees. He accounts for the blood on his shirt by the fact that it has been a part of his duties in the tannery to handle fresh hides. The gore on his pants he declares to have come from the veins of a chicken which he had killed the night before. There does not seem to be anything more than a general suspicion against the boy Fred Egner.

#### THE SHUDDERING HORSE.

There are several instances connected with the scene of the horrible tragedy which must come under the head of circumstantial evidence. We have already referred to the great size and ferocity of the dogs guarding the premises, and their peculiar quietness during the performance of the hideous crime as conclusive proof that the murderers must have both been very familiar with the premises and the mastiffs. When we visited the tannery late last evening in company with Messrs. Farny and Duveneck to take sketches of the buildings, we found it impossible to gain entrance by reason of the dogs' ferocity. Another curious fact is the condition in which the horse, the dumb witness of that frightful crime, was found this morning—shuddering and trembling from head to hoofs, his eyes wild with terror. Petting and caressing availed nothing; and the whole forenoon the animal was in a perfect tremor of fear.

#### THE FIVE-PRONGED FORK,

Used by the murderers either to kill their victim, or to stuff his body into the furnace, was found in the stable, with blood and hair still adhering to it, and a suspender-buckle

on the fourth prong. It is curious that a similar suspender-buckle was found among the ashes of the furnace.

Besides the fork, a long stake, sharpened to a spear-like point and dyed at the smaller end with blood, appears to have served in the deed of murder. A small broom had evidently been used to brush up the blood, as it was completely coated with thickly crusted gore. How it happened that the murderers could have been careless enough to leave such damning evidence against them, we can scarcely imagine.

#### THE LATEST.

John Hollerbach, by order of Chief Kiersted was arrested in his bed at two o'clock this morning by Lieutenant Benninger, and locked up in the Oliver street Station-house as a witness. He stuck to his apocryphal story. In conversation with a reporter this morning Rufer said if he had killed Schilling, he would have put him in a better place—a tank of salt-water under the tannery, where he never would have smelt. Would that tank not be a good place to drag for bloody clothes?

The following witnesses will be examined at the Coroner's inquest this morning: Wm. Hollerbach, Jr., C. Westenbrock, N. Westenbrock, Ban Fruink, Jos. Schlingrop, R. Mellenbrook, Henry Korte, E. Kerr, Wm. Osterhage, Henry Kote, Jr., Isadore Freiberg, Henry Freiberg.

George Rufer stated that his wife was at the house of her sister, Mrs. Peter Eckert, the officers who were sent in search of her having failed to find her at her home on Dunlap street.

Rufer couldn't tell where Mrs. Eckert lived. Lieutenant Wersel, without any guide except that the husband of

Mrs. Eckert was a potter, set out in search of her, and after a tramp of three or four miles, calling at a dozen houses, found her on Western Avenue.

She stated that Mrs. Rufer was not with her, had not been with her, that they were not on good terms, and did not visit each other. This leaves the whereabouts of Mrs. Rufer still a mystery.

A little after midnight an officer of the Oliver street Station came running into the station-house with a statement that rumors were afloat that a band had organized to take the prisoners out of their cells and lynch them. A good reserve of police was afterward kept at the station.

## VALENTINE VAGARIES

### UNSAINTLY FANTASIES ON A SAINTLY FESTIVAL.

The antique loveliness of Paganism is not yet dead, and to-day is sacred to Cytherea, the snow-limbed goddess, whose subtle sway, immortal as her beauty, will cease only with the death of the human race. Her altar-fires died out in pale ashes nearly two thousand years ago; and the dust of her Cyprian and Paphian and Roman worshipers mingles with the dust of her temples; and the colder sunshine of our modern world no longer kisses her graceful statues on the public places of modern cities. But the world to-day still bears her rosy yoke, and seems in nowise inclined to rebel. This is her festival—her beloved Pagan festival, ancient as the age which taught that birds sought their mates upon this day of the month. Nominally this Sunday is sacred to St. Valentine. But St. Valentine retired from the scene before the close of the last century, finding that naughty Aphrodite was altogether too much for him. No one ever finds the picture of the Saint upon a love-missive in these days; the image of some little-winged love-god, the mischievous son of Venus, is now stamped upon all.

But it is on the eve of St. Valentine that the fair goddess most strongly asserts her sway, descending to thrill the heart of the sleeping word with love-dreams and love-memories. It is the evening of all evenings, when dusty drawers are carefully opened; and faded letters, with the ghost of sweet perfume still clinging to them, are read by the flickering fire-light; and a little lock of hair, tied about with soft threads of silk, is removed from its sacred resting-



place in some jeweled locket, to be reverently kissed. This, too, is the evening of all evenings when lonely people dream of ideal homes, and strive to read their future fate in the fantastic light of dying fires; while the sleigh-bells tinkle without, and the white moonlight glitters upon the crystal leaves of those fairy frost-trees which Winter loves to paint upon window-panes. The delicious rustle of a silken dress; the gentle mesmerism of soft eyes; the electric thrill of glossy curls touching one's cheek, together with the pleasant pressure of some dainty young head on one's shoulder; the clear, full curve of a rosy cheek, melting into the snow of a white neck; the sweet music of a silvery voice; the caress of a gentle little hand playing with one's beard—these are all appropriate subjects of meditation for St. Valentine's Eve. The remembrance of one's first valentine, and the pleasurable emotions of mingled surprise and gladness and wonder which its receipt occasioned, is very apt to recur at this season of the year. It is the great dusting-day in Memory's most sacred chambers, when the outlines of long past scenes become once more vivid, and we again find ourselves humming melodies heard but once years before and forgotten; and the image of the first sweetheart, grown rather dingy and dusty for want of faithful attention, is again brushed up and retouched in spots where the colors had faded away. Many a one who peeped in his mirror last evening, and found a sprinkling of gray in his beard despaired of making a home in the remote future, and cast a package of faded letters in the fire that he might enjoy the dismal pleasure of beholding his hopes and his romances die out in ashes. For who can deny that there is a real pleasure in dwelling upon one's sorrows, and fancying one's self the most miserable creature in the universe?

But these are few. Young blood ever sparkles with warm bright hopes, and thousands of hearts beat somewhat faster last evening from the mere anticipation of what might happen when certain love-missives reached their destination. But to-day will be the Day of Blushes, when a thousand maidenly cheeks will wear the transient ruddiness that Venus loves. May the fair goddess grant that all honest hopes born of the hour be realized, and all evil wiles be baffled! Jove was wont to laugh at Lovers' perjuries, but then Jove is dead; and the fairest of the Olympian Immortals is alone truly immortal.

# THE RESTLESS DEAD

## CONCERNING HAUNTED HOUSES

“*A negotio perambulante in tenebris, libera nos, Domine*”—Lord deliver us from the Thing that walketh about in the darkness.

It is a mistake to suppose that the strictly old-fashioned belief in ghosts has been robbed of its terrors by that modern departure from the legitimate ghost-drama which Spiritualism has taken. The ghosts evoked by our modern medium-wizards are but very feeble ghosts indeed; they can only make their presence apparent by a peculiar process termed materialization; they can only materialize with great labor and anguish; and having materialized, they are wholly dependent upon the medium's mercy for even such ephemeral existence. Furthermore, they can excite no fear, nor can they gain any reverent respect from the living by reason of their supernatural powers. In brief, it may be stated that the ghosts of Spiritualism are domesticated, and harmless by reason of their domestication. But the old-fashioned ghost continues to make night hideous, render houses untenable, and defy exorcists; and multitudes who scoff at modern Spiritualism do not scoff so much at the terrors of darkness. Spiritualism, by pretending to familiarize the living with the dead, has not at all succeeded in rendering night less terrible to the superstitious; the greatest enemy of ghosts is, after all, the modern architect. Goblinry and witchcraft flourished best in the Gothic age,—the age of turreted castles, and vast cathedrals, and giant palaces,—of abysmal cellars, and gloomy halls, and secret

chambers,—of Gobelin and Bayeux tapestry, grotesque carvings, heraldic emblems, gargoyles and monsters in wood and stone. The lightsome, airy, modern dwelling-place affords little room for the growth of legend, little shadow for specters to lurk in, and little opportunity for diseased fancy to create any Frankenstein deformities. Immense height and breadth have comparatively ceased to enter into modern building plans and specifications; grotesque carving is almost a lost art; dragon-clawed furniture has gone to mingle with the wreck of things that were; modern painted portraits never indulge in the freak of leaving their frames at night to wander about the house; and specters hate gas-light. But, nevertheless, we occasionally hear of some uncanny places even in practical, pork-packing Cincinnati, where the dead render the lives of the living a burden to them. It seems that the phantoms seldom condescend to make themselves visible, save to a favored few, but they have an unpleasant way of stealing up and down stairs by night, especially up stairs in which the fourth or fifth step creaks; of putting their horrid hands on the faces of folks in bed; of rustling their robes; of pulling the bed-clothes off of beds; of arranging sheets in a ghostly fashion, suggesting the presence of Something Horrible underneath, and of making very nasty noises "in the dead vast and middle of the night." Of four goblin stories recently whispered to us, we only attempted to investigate one, for obvious reasons, but all are interesting.

The scene of the first is located in the residence of a very popular and wealthy citizen, the father of a large grown-up family, and a man once noted for his skepticism in matters spiritualistic. Some years ago his only daughter, a beautiful and accomplished young woman, died under circum-

stances which we do not feel ourselves at liberty to mention, beyond that she died at home, surrounded by her relatives, and deservedly lamented by all who had known her. The luxurious residence for a time became a place of mourning, and silent as a great mausoleum; but people supposed that, as grief is proverbially short-lived, the house would soon become as before, a place of fashionable gathering and joyous meeting. It never has. Scarcely were the remains under the sod of Spring Grove, or the crape hangings removed from the door, ere certain servants of the family declared that Miss —— still walked about the silent rooms at night, dressed in the attire she loved best in life, and still

“—fair and stately,  
But pale as are the dead.”

The family at first refused to believe the story, and remained skeptical even after one of the hired girls had thrown up her situation from sheer terror. Then, however, it is said that still stranger things came to pass. Late in the night, when all slumbered, the sound of the drawing-room piano being rapidly and lightly fingered aroused the sleepers. Yet the drawing-room door had been locked, and the piano had been locked after the young lady's burial, not, however, until its white keys had become dusty from weeks of silence, during which time the hired girls were all too busy attending the sick and aiding the physicians to think of dusting furniture. And when all was over the instrument was closed and locked, with the dust still upon its ivory keys. Yet the music resounded plainly through the building, rapid but faint, as though the instrument were being fingered by a feeble but skillful player.

The family arose and proceeded with lighted candles to

the door of the drawing-room, and again listened to the ghostly playing. It was distinct, skillful, yet had something drowsily weird about it. They unlocked the door, and it instantly ceased. At the same instant a current of icy air swept by, extinguishing the candle, and a sound as of rustling silk trailing passed from the drawing-room through the hallway. The red embers of a winter fire still glowed in the grate, and the glow was sufficiently distinct to render the furniture and other objects visible. But there was no one there. The piano was still locked, and on raising the cover it was found that the dust still lay undisturbed upon the ivory keys. When the door was closed again the playing recommenced, and the servants fled in fear.

Night after night the same thing occurred, until at length it ceased to excite even comment. The humming burr of a sewing machine, the opening and banging to of doors, the gentle sound of a woman's foot upon the stairs, the tap of her fingers upon windows, and the rustling of her silk dress along the corridors, low on the carpets, loud on the oilcloth, have all become of nightly occurrence. Some have actually seen Miss ——'s figure, it is whispered, but never her face—the figure casts no shadow, and the face is veiled as in mists. A certain part of the house was finally closed up, and none of the family have entered it for years.

This story is eclipsed in ghastliness by another which comes from Longworth street. On a certain square of that street—no matter where—there is a three-story brick with a history. It has a dismal back-yard, an abysmal cellar, and nine rooms, whereof one has been for years untenanted. Like the House of Usher, this house appears to have an atmosphere of its own, a heavy, sickly atmosphere, laden with odors unsavory as the odors of death—odors, however,

which are seemingly incapable of analyzation or definition. Some say the odors emanate from the dank and dark cellar. Certain it is that the cellar is a most ghastly place; its leprous walls drip deadly moisture; its stones seem to sweat an icy and death-like dampness; its vaulted roof and sides are covered with growths of white fungi, hideous and poisonous; ghastly exhalations seem to rise from its floor; and aught left in it is covered in a few days with mildews thick as a January hoar-frost. "Put lime in that cellar," said a wise man not long since to a disgusted tenant. "Lime, lime! I have poured rivers of lime into that cellar," was the answer; "but the exhalations remain, and the fungi increase in multitude, and the mildew does not cease and the walls will sweat. There is not a rat or a mouse in the house; no cats will stay here; and dogs howl with terror if they are brought even into the yard. I can't divest myself of the idea that there is something under the cellar-floor—somebody must be buried there—somebody must be slowly rotting there—the worms must be crawling among bones there; but I have not got the courage to dig down and find out." "Bah! you are a d—d fool," retorted the Wise Man, turning away with a disgusted air.

Perhaps he was right; but now comes the ugliest part of the story. We have already mentioned that one of the rooms is untenable. This room is in the upper story, back—a small, low, long and narrow apartment, broken into angles by the passage of two brick flues through it, and illy lighted by two small windows. Several attempts were made to rent this room; firstly as a single sleeping room; secondly, in conjunction with other rooms on the same floor to families. But no one could keep it more than a few weeks; the tenants would move away in a mysterious,

sudden manner, making the landlord a present of the rent; and the apartment was finally abandoned to the spiders and the centipedes and the foul insect life that ghoulishly and gluttonous battens on filth even in the dwellings of the dead.

And what was the matter? Well, they say that no one ever saw anything very, very horrible, but there were dead people there, and the dead would give the living no rest. Sleep was impossible. The clothes were always pulled from the sleepers, and hands were laid on their faces, and strange noises were heard in the room all night. The hands were described to us as very small, tiny things like the hands of babes unborn, and the noises resembled the crying of weeny children—the voice of

“An infant crying in the night,  
An infant crying for the light.  
And with no language but a cry.”

So that the trouble seemed to be brought about by ghost-babies, who patted the faces of the living with their tiny hands, and cried because they were motherless even in the spirit world. Poor little ghost-babies! The only other facts we have been able to discover in regard to this haunted apartment is that years ago the room had been occupied by a female abortionist.

Our next story does not hold together so well. It comes from a well known and fashionable house of evil fame on Plum street. It is also connected with a cellar. They say that the specter of a girl, a wicked and handsome girl, with white robes and gilt morocco shoes, and bare arms, and long-flowing blonde hair, walks up and down the staircases, and through rooms, and looks through key-holes dur-



ing the "wee sma' hours," occasionally shrieking and vanishing just as the East becomes gray. This ghost is said to be the ghost of one who once lived there, and sinned there, and died there, and was finally buried in the cellar at her own request—probably in order that she might enjoy a drink of sherry occasionally. But that grave in the cellar is too shallow a story.

Our fourth ghost story is not altogether fresh; but is sufficiently novel to dilate upon. Many of our readers will remember that it was rumored nearly four years since, that the Exposition Building was a species of spectral hippodrome—a headquarters for ghosts—in fact; and that the watchmen were worried in all their seven senses by the people who were ill-mannered enough to leave their comfortable graves at night. As familiarity with the specters has not by any means bred contempt for them with the watchman; and as the said specters have been conducting themselves in an unprecedentedly reckless manner of late; and as there are good and sufficient reasons why the Exposition Building should be haunted, we propose to give the results of an investigation of the matter.

Firstly, then, we may call attention to the fact that the site occupied by the buildings is none other than the old Potter's Field, which formerly extended west beyond the bed of the canal, and which was abandoned to other uses about thirty-five years ago. When the canal was cut through the soil, enriched with human remains and sown with human bones, about a hundred skeletons had to be removed and committed to the already overcrowded Place of Nameless Graves now covered by the buildings. When the steamer *Moselle*, (in 1838, we believe), exploded her boilers above the site of the present Water-works, and blew the

skulls and limbs and blackened trunks of her passengers all over the city, so that falling bodies fell through the roofs of houses, the remains of the victims were gathered together and buried in a spot now covered by the south end of Horticultural Hall. When the Exposition elevator was being erected in Power Hall more than a barrel full of skulls and bones were disinterred, and placed under the floor in another portion of the building. It will likewise be remembered that a marine and military hospital stood once on the spot now occupied by the stairway leading to the bridge from Floral to Art Hall. This building was once an orphan asylum, or something of that kind, and during the war was used as a military hospital. Not a foot of ground lies under the Exposition Building unoccupied by moldering bones—human bones—which the ringed worms have long since tired of gnawing.

It was, of course, natural enough that the ghosts claiming kinship with the bones disinterred from the bed of the canal, and the ghosts claiming kinship with the bones disinterred to make room for the elevator, should cease to rest. It was also to be expected that the ghosts dwelling in all the nameless graves beneath the huge wooden building now being prepared for the Sixth Annual Exposition should object to so much noise as that which has been made there by military parades and police drills and centennial tea-parties and firemen's balls and other entertainments. And from the close of the First Annual Exposition the ghosts have been very troublesome.

Certainly the building is a weird place on a winter's night to the lonely watchman. Illumed by one solitary light, or the faint glow of the street-lamps streaming through the

dingy windows on the silent Plum street side, its roof lost in gloom, assumes the loftiness of a gothic Cathedral; its long halls become peopled with grotesque shadow; its thousand wooden pillars with branch supports take the white glare and aspect of huge bones—antediluvian bones—and in the awful silence one feels as though wandering in the interior of some monstrous skeleton.

“Four years ago,” said a watchman to us, “I first took charge of this building as night-watchman, and for nearly a year my life became a burden to me. The weirdest and strangest noises would occur at intervals all night. Rappings on the ceiling, under the floor, on the doors and windows; the sound of stealthy footfalls behind me, or of loud tramping before me; the crash of heavy timbers thrown from the ceiling, of glass dashed upon the floor, of heavy bodies being dragged over the planking—these never ceased, except during Exposition time. Whenever I heard a noise I always went at once to the spot where it had occurred; but I could never find anything. There was no broken glass, no timber out of place, no one at the door. I have heard loud and continuous rapping at the door on a winter’s night, when the snow was four feet deep without—piled up in drifts by a singing wind that shrieked through every crack in the planking. But when I opened the door there was no one there, not even a track in the snow, nothing but the drifting snow and the bitter wind, and the silent stars in the frosty sky. I have crept up silently to the door and listened for the rap, and opened immediately after it occurred. Nothing there. They talk about the noises caused by contraction and expansion, the settling of the building, and so forth. But I know all about that, for I was once

a master builder myself, and I can distinguish between the noises of creaking timber and the noises made by these—these Things.

“They never touch me, but I always know when they are around, by an icy chill, a thrill as of electricity, a feeling like what the French call *peau-de-poulet*—goose-flesh. They never annoy me now by mere knocking and rapping, for I have got used to it. So used to it that sometimes when people have really knocked at the door I didn’t open, because I thought it was only the dead that kept knocking, knocking, knocking.

“But I can’t get used to that stealthy tread of feet behind me, following me wherever I go. When I go up-stairs, It goes too; when I tread upon a creaking stair, It follows, and the step also creaks,—only with a fainter creak, as though a lighter person were on it. Then it has a horrible habit of breathing loudly and long and hideously,—a sound like ‘O-o-o-o-ah-h-ho,’ as of one in awful pain; and I have sometimes fancied that I could feel Its breath, cold—oh, so cold!—on the back of my neck.

“I am not a Spiritualist, but I must believe the evidence of my own senses as to the dim Things round here. Dogs won’t stay here unless they are forced to, and then they will whine with fear all night and keep close to my heels. Then there is something in Main Hall that walks back and fro with a resounding, soldierly tramp; and I can sometimes hear a noise like the grounding of a musket butt on the floor. There was a medium here once, who said it was the ghost of a soldier, and that he could see his uniform dimly, as in a dream; and occasionally the phosphorescent gleam of a spectral bayonet. But I have as good eyes as the medium, and I have placed a lantern on the ground between

me and the Thing that walks; and I could still hear the steps, loud, military steps, between me and the light; but I never saw anything. It has no form and casts no shadow.”

So runs the tale of our informant, a powerful, clear-headed man, not at all dyspeptic or weak-minded. It is curious that his story is well and widely corroborated. What the nature of these strange noises may be, we confess ourselves at a loss to comprehend; but certain it is that dogs show signs of unmistakable fear if taken into the building; and a certain employee threw up his situation in the building by reason of things he heard and saw.

## SOME STRANGE EXPERIENCE

### THE REMINISCENCES OF A GHOST-SEER

“They do say the dead never come back again,” she observed half dreamingly; “but then I have seen such queer things!”

She was a healthy, well built country girl, whom the most critical must have called good looking, robust and ruddy, despite the toil of life in a boarding-house kitchen, but with a strangely thoughtful expression in her large dark eyes, as though she were ever watching the motions of Somebody who cast no shadow, and was invisible to all others. Spiritualists were wont to regard her as a strong “medium,” although she had a peculiar dislike of being so regarded. She had never learned to read or write, but possessed naturally a wonderful wealth of verbal description, a more than ordinarily vivid memory, and a gift of conversation which would have charmed an Italian *improvisatore*. These things we learned during an idle half hour passed one summer’s evening in her company on the kitchen stairs; while the boarders lounged on the porch in the moonlight, and the hall lamp created flickering shadows along the varnished corridors, and the hungry rats held squeaking carnival in the dark dining-room. To the weird earnestness of the story-teller, the melody of her low, soft voice, and the enthralling charm of her conversation, we cannot attempt to do justice; nor shall we even undertake to report her own mysterious narrative word for word, but only to convey to

the reader those impressions of it which linger in the writer's memory.

"The first thing I can remember about ghost-people," she said, "happened to me when I was quite a little child. It was in Bracken County, Kentucky, on a farm, between Dover and Augusta—about half way between the towns—for I remember a great big stone that was set up on the road just above the farm, which they called the 'Half-way Stone,' and it had a big letter H cut on it. The farm-house was away back from the river, in a lonely place, among woods of beech and sugar-trees; and was one of the weirdest old buildings you ever saw. It was built before there were any nails used out West; so you can imagine how old it was; and I heard that the family who first built it had many a terrible fight with the Indians. Before the house ran a rocky lane full of gutters and mud holes; and behind it was a great apple orchard, where very few apples grew, because no one took care of the trees. Great slimy, creeping plants had grown up about them, and strangled them; and the pathways were almost grown over with high weeds, and strong rank grass; and owls lived in some of the trees, but the family seemed to be afraid to shoot them. At the end of the orchard yawned a great, deep well, unused for many years; cats and dogs and rabbits had found graves in the fetid black water; the stones were green with moss and slime; the bucket was covered with moss; and great black snakes which lived in holes in the sides of the well used to wriggle out on sunny days and blink their wicked, slimy eyes at the house. This well was at the mouth of a deep hollow, choked up with elder-brush and those creeping plants that can never be killed, and there were black-snakes, garter-snakes and dry-land moccasins living there. Near

the hollow on the other side flowed a clear "branch" of water, over a bed of soft blue clay, which we used to roll into "slate pencils" and make mud pies of. One time we wanted to make a little mill-dam there, to drown some geese in, and while digging into the blue clay with a grubbing-hoe we found four great big Mexican dollars buried there. We did not know what they were then, and we brought them to the farmhouse, where they took them from us. Some time afterwards two men came and bought the piece of ground where we had found the money, and they set to digging; but nothing more was ever found there.

"The farmhouse looked as if it had been built a hundred years ago, but those who built it built well and strong, for it was sound from roof to foundation. Many of the big trees in the orchard, planted by them, had rotted and died, and the bark was peeling off over nests of the gray wood-lice that burrowed under it; but the old house was still strong. It was a very queer, antiquated structure, with ghostly looking gables, and great limestone chimneys towered up at each end of it. There were four big rooms, two up stairs and two down stairs, and a little kitchen built against the house, making a fifth room; there were five old-fashioned doors of heavy planking, and there were eight or ten narrow windows, with ever so many tiny panes of glass in them. The house was built of heavy sarsaparilla logs, with floors of black walnut, and walls ceiled with blue ash; and there were no shelves, but only recesses in the walls—small, square recesses, where books and little things were kept. The clapboards were fastened down on the roof with wooden pegs, and the flooring was pegged down to the sleepers. Between the planking and the logs of the south room on the first floor there was an old Revolutionary



musket built into the wall. The north room, next to this, was never occupied.

"I remember that room well; for the door was often open, although no one of the family ever entered it since an old lady named Frankie Boyd had died there, years before, of consumption. She had lingered a long time, and coughed a great deal, and used to spit on the wall beside the bed. The bed was an old-time piece of furniture, with posters; and all the furniture was old-fashioned. There was an old-fashioned clothes-chest with legs; an old-fashioned rocking-chair, with great heavy rockers; and an old-fashioned spinning-wheel. One of the old lady's dresses, a black dress, still hung on the wall where she had placed it the last time she had taken it off; but it had become so old and moth-eaten that a touch would have crumbled it like so much burnt paper. The dust was thick on the floor, so thick that the foot would leave an impression in it; and the windows were yellow like parchment for want of cleaning.

"They said that the old lady used to walk about that room, and that no one could sleep there. Doors used to open and shut without the touch of human hands; and all night long the sound of that rocking-chair rocking, and of the spinning-wheel humming, could be heard through the house. That was why nobody ever went into that room. But the ghost of Frankie Boyd was not the only ghost there. The house had once been owned by the Paddy family, and Lee Paddy, the "old man," and all his children, had died in the room used when I was there for a kitchen, and had been buried in the family graveyard, on the north side of the house, under the shadow of a great locust tree. After Frankie Boyd died the house fell into the hands of her

nephew, a man named Bean, who had a rich father, a scientific old gentleman, in Lewis County. Both father and son were queer people, and the old man's eccentricity at one time nearly lost him his life. Some one killed an immense blacksnake on his farm, and the scientific Mr. Bean had it cooked for dinner after the manner of cooking salmon. Then he invited a friendly neighbor to dine with him. They say that the neighbor was delighted with the repast, and declared that he had never eaten finer salmon. But when old Bean told him that he had eaten a black snake which John killed yesterday morning, the shock nearly killed him, and he staggered home to get his shot-gun. Bean did not dare to leave his home for weeks afterwards.

"After the death of Frankie Boyd, the old farmhouse in Bracken County of course became a weirder and ghostlier place than ever—a scary place, as the slaves around there used to call it. It was a dreadfully creaky place, and no one could pass out or down the old staircase without making a prodigious creaking and crackling. Now at all hours of the day or night those stairs creaked and creaked, and doors opened and banged, and steps echoed overhead in the rooms upstairs. I was a very little girl then and had a little boy-playmate, who used to run about with me all over the farm, digging in the blue clay, running after the fowls, watching the great snakes that glided about the noisome well, climbing the strangled apple trees in search of withered and shrunken apples, and throwing pebbles at the great, ugly horned owls that used to sit there among the creepers, blinking with their great yellow eyes. We did not know why the house was haunted by such odd noises; and the old negro servants were strictly forbidden

to tell us anything about the queer things that walked about there. But, nevertheless, we had a perfect horror of the house; we dreaded to be left in it alone; we never entered it on sunny days, except at meal time, and when foul weather forced us to stay in-doors the folks often found us sitting down and crying in a corner. We could not at first tell why we cried, further than that we were afraid of something undefinable—a vague fear always weighed upon us like a nightmare. They told us to go upstairs, one evening after dark, and we had to go without a light. Something came after us, and stepped up the stairs behind us, and touched our heads, and followed us into the room, and seemed to sob and moan. We screamed with fear, and the folks ran up with a lantern and took us down stairs again. Some one used also to play with the rusty old musket that had been built into the wall, and would get under the black walnut floor, knocking loudly and long; and all the time the rocking-chair creaked and thumped in the north room. Bean had got used to it all; but he seldom went up stairs, and the books in the old recesses became black with layers of clammy dust, and the spiders spun thick, glutinous webs across the windows.

“It came to pass about six months after the dead had followed us into the dark room upstairs, that a great storm came down through the woods, wrestling with the ancient trees, tearing away the serpent-creepers in the garden, swelling the springs to torrents, and the old farmhouse rattled through all its dry bones. The great limestone chimneys and the main building stood the test bravely: but the little kitchen building where all the Paddy family had died, was shattered from clapboards to doorstep. It had been built in a very curious fashion, a fashion passed away and for-

gotten; and the cunning of modern house builders could not rebuild it. So they pulled it down, log by log, and brought destruction upon many spider colonies, and mice nests, and serpent holes; building a new pinewood structure in its place, with modern doors and windows. And from that time the strange noises ceased and the dead seemed to rest, except in the room where the yellow spittle had dried upon the walls and the old-fashioned furniture had become hoary with years of dust. The steps on the staircase died away forever, and the knocking beneath the floor ceased.

“But I must not forget to tell you one more curious thing about the place. There was a hen-house near the grave of the Paddy family; and the hens were great in multitude, and laid eggs by hundreds. Somehow or other we could scarcely ever get any eggs for all that. The hens were thin, spectral birds, which looked as if they had been worn out by anxiety and disappointment. Something or other used to steal their eggs the moment they were laid; and what it was no one ever pretended to know. The old negro cook hinted that the ghosts of the Paddy family sucked the eggs; but as we could never find even an egg-shell, this supposition did not hold good. Traps were laid for pole-cats, weasels, coons, and every variety of wild egg-thieves; but none were ever seen there or caught; and the poultry ceased to propagate their species, so that fresh relays of poultry had to be purchased ever and anon. I don't know whether the old farmhouse still stands, or whether Bachelor Bean has been gathered to his fathers, for it is many years since I left there to live with friends at Dover.

“I had another experience, of a much more unpleasant kind, I think, during the time I remained at Dover. All the country round there is hilly; and there are two broad

turnpike roads winding out of the city—one called the Maysville pike, the other the Dover pike, running from Dover beyond Minerva. Now, both of these pikes have been the scene of violent death; and both are said to be haunted. Of the latter fact I have the testimony of my own eyes—which, I make bold to remark, are very sharp eyes.

“About four miles from Dover, on the Maysville pike, the road, following the winding of the hills, crosses a rude bridge of rocks and timber over a swift stream, and curves into the shape of a gigantic horse-shoe. This place is called ‘Horse-shoe Bend,’ is situated between two hills, and is wild and ‘scary’ in the extreme. Since the occurrence which gave a specter to Horse-shoe Bend, few have the courage to pass the spot after nightfall; and those who must, put spurs to their horses and gallop by as though the Devil were riding behind them; for the specter of a suicide haunts the bend.

“I can’t well remember when it happened, but I do not think it was more than half a dozen years ago; and I even forget the man’s name. I only know that he was a married man, pretty well-to-do, and lived at Rock Springs, below Augusta. One day he left his home on business, and was detained in town beyond his usual hour for returning. It was a bright, frosty winter’s night; the pike was white and hard as iron, and his horse’s hoofs made merry music on the long trot home, until he saw his farmhouse and its shadow lying black and sharp on the fields, and the blood-red glow of the wood fire in the great limestone fireplace. Then it occurred to him, strangely enough, to dismount, tie his horse to a tree, and creep softly up to the window. His wife sat by the fire, but not alone; the arm of a stranger was about her waist, and the fingers of a stranger were

playing with her hair. Then he turned, sick at heart, from the window, and crept along in the shadows to where his horse stood, and mounted and rode away, recklessly, madly, furiously. People who looked out of their windows as he passed say they never saw man ride so before. The hard pike flashed into fire under the iron hoofs of the flying horse, the rider cursed like a fiend, and the great watchdogs in the farmhouses, howled as though a specter were sweeping by. Neither horse nor horseman ever returned. Some little school children next morning passing by Horse-shoe Bend, in the golden light of the early sun, saw the farmer hanging from a tree by his bridle rein; and the horse laying by the side of the road, dead, and frozen like his rider. Preacher Holton and Sam Berry cut down the body; but the specter of the suicide has never left the spot. They say the only way to make the spirit of a suicide rest is to bury the body with a stake driven through it. I don't know whether that is true; but I know that every time I passed Horse-shoe Bend I could see the farmer leaning against a tree, dressed in his gray winter suit, and the horse lying down by the side of the road. You could see the very woof of the cloth, the very hair of the black horse: yet the moment you got near enough to touch the specter with the hand, it passed away like the flame of a candle blown out. I have often seen it.

“I don't know very much about the history of the apparition which haunts the other pike; I have forgotten the name, but I have seen the thing which walks there. About three miles from Dover, on the way to Minerva, is a toll gate, and about a mile and a half above the toll gate is a place called Firman's Woods, a hilly place, with trees. In a hollow by the side of the road at this point, a farmer

was murdered for his money, and his body flung into the brush. He had ridden over that road a hundred times, and paid many a toll at the toll-gate; everybody knew his grizzled beard and broad-brimmed hat when he passed by. On the night of the murder he had disposed of some stock and was returning home with a well filled pocketbook, when he met another horseman traveling toward Minerva. Perhaps he was incautious with his new acquaintance; perhaps he foolishly displayed the greasy pocket-book, flat with rolls of green bills, for on reaching Firman's Woods the stranger stabbed him to the heart with a bowie-knife, hid the corpse in the hollow, and galloped off with the dead man's money. The victim of the murder has never found the sleepy rest of death. A spectral rider gallops nightly along the pike, sometimes flying past the toll-gate invisible, his horse's hoofs echoing loud and sharply of cold nights, and splashing through the mud with a soggy sound on rainy evenings. But he is only seen at Firman's Woods—a shadowy figure, headless and horrible. I have seen it, and beheld it dissolve like the flame of a candle in a strong current of wind.

“The most frightful experience I ever had—at least the one which frightened me most—was in the town of Minerva. I was working for a family there as cook, and my room was a dark and shadowy apartment, in the back of the building. It had a window, but the window gave scarcely any light, because it faced a higher building across the alley, and had not been cleaned for years. I thought there was something queer about the room, because the first day I came to the house Joe—took me upstairs with a candle in his hand, and said, ‘You won’t be afraid to sleep here, will you? Well, I said, ‘No.’”

[Here we ventured to ask the narrator what Joe's other name was, but she objected, for private reasons, to mention it, and we had to content ourselves with the fact that Joe was the proprietor of the house and a man of family.]

"I worked there only one day. When supper was over, and the dishes had been washed up, and everything put in order, I went upstairs to bed. I remember that I felt afraid—I could not tell why—to blow the candle out; but I thought the folks would scold me for wasting candles, so I blew it out at last, and crept into bed, and tried to pull the covers up over me. I found I could not move them at first; they seemed to be nailed to the foot of the bed. Then I gave a very strong pull, and succeeded in getting the clothes up, although it seemed as if a heavy weight had been lying on them. Suddenly I felt a distinct pull back—something was pulling the clothes off of the bed. I pulled them back again, and they were again pulled off. Of course I felt frightened; but I had seen and heard strange things before, and concluded to lie down quietly and let the clothes be, because I thought that if I would let the Thing alone, it would let me alone. And at last I fell asleep.

"I don't know how long I slept; but I had a hideous nightmare, and awoke panting in the dark, feeling that something was in the room with me. About a minute afterward it put its fingers on my mouth, and then stroked my nose. I thought of getting up, but I was too frightened to move; when I felt an immense hand placed on my chest, pressing me down to the bed—a hand so vast that it covered me from shoulder to shoulder, and felt heavier than iron. I was too frightened to faint, too spell-bound to scream, too



powerless to move under that giant pressure. And with the pressure came horror, a horror of hell, unspeakably awful, worse than the ghastly enchantment of a thousand nightmares. I remember that I would have wished to die but for the hideous fancy that my ghost would go out in the dark to that awful Thing. The hand was suddenly removed, and I shrieked like a maniac in the dungeon of a lunatic asylum. Every one heard that shriek; and they came running up with lights and white faces. They showed me the doors and the windows securely fastened, and showed me that no human being had been in the room besides myself; but I did not need to be told that. I left the house next day.

“There was something of the same kind in a house in Lexington, where I used to live. It had once been owned by a lady named Jane ——, a slaveholder in the days before the war; but she had passed to the place of Shadows, and her house had fallen into other hands. Still her sins haunted it—haunted it horribly. They say that one winter’s night, many years ago, she had whipped a negro slave to death with her own hands for some trifling act of disobedience. He was a powerful man, but they had stripped and securely tied him so that resistance was impossible, and the woman beat him with a leather strap, dipped in water, for eight consecutive hours. And the body died and was buried under the floor, and became green with rotteness; but the ghost of the man walked about and groaned, and tormented all who lived in the building. The woman used to sit on her doorstep all night crying in the moonshine, while the ghost groaned within. At last she moved away, and died in another neighborhood; but even

when I was there the specter used to pull the bedclothing off the beds down stairs, if any one dared to sleep there.

“I have seen and heard many odd things of this kind; and once I saw what they call a wraith or a double, but I don't think you would find them so interesting as my last experience in a Cincinnati house. It was on West Fifth street, and I was working there both as cook and chambermaid. There was a story connected with the house, which I never knew correctly, and will therefore not attempt to relate, beyond that a certain young girl died there and came back afterwards. But I was not told about this circumstance until I had worked there for some time. It happened one evening, about dusk, that I went upstairs to one of the bed-rooms on an errand; and I saw a young lady, all in white, standing before the mirror, tall and silent. The sun had set the color of blood that evening, and a faint rosy-glow still mingled with the gloomy gray, so that objects were plainly discernible and sharply outlined. Now, as I had left all the boarders at supper, I thought on first entering the room that the figure before the mirror must be that of some lady visitor, whose coming I had not known. I stood for a moment and looked at her, but did not see any face, for her back was turned to me, and, as she seemed unusually tall, I thought that the blackness of her hair was lost in the blackness of the shadows above the mirror. But it suddenly occurred to me to glance at the mirror. I did so. There was the figure, tall, silent and white, but there was no face or head visible. I approached to touch the white shadow; it vanished like the flame of a candle vanishes, or as the breath vanishes from the mirror that has been breathed upon.

“People call me a medium, sometimes, and ask me to sit in dark circles and help to call up spirits. I have always refused—do you wonder at it? I tell you the truth, sir, when I say that far from refusing to leave the dead alone, I would be only too happy if they would leave me alone.”

## A BIRD-STORE REVERIE

### THE MYSTIC HISTORY OF DOVES AND SERPENTS

At 5 P. M. of an October day, when the broadfaced sun is resting his chin on the western hills to take a last steady look along a hundred level streets at once, making ten thousand windows glow like molten metal, filling all the city with ruddy glory, touching the hazy purple of distant spires with a gleam of gold, and tinting a rippling sea of fleecy cloud in the west carmine color, people are perhaps more inclined to indulge revery out of doors than at other hours and seasons. That soft, vapory gold of October sunsets, which tinges even objects uncomely under other lights with something of dreamy beauty, lends a peculiar enchantment to shop windows and anything at all curious or novel exhibited behind a square of French plate, will attract a larger crowd of gazers on an October afternoon than perhaps on any other. People are prone to muse at this time of the year upon subjects the most commonplace; and are less inclined than usual to satisfy curiosity with a hasty glance; nobody is in a hurry. And on just such an afternoon, the *dolce-far-niente* spirit of the hour prompted us to muse upon divers curiosities of animal life exhibited in the windows of a bird-store. The windows aforesaid were decidedly dingy, and poorly adapted for exhibition; but the sun-light sloped in through them upon some queer things which were attracting quite a crowd. There were tropical birds of metalically lustrous plumage, carmine, emerald and azure; songsters and talkers; paroquets and

macaws; orioles and cockatoos; finches and canaries; fancy pigeons and pink-footed doves; but the winged creatures evidently excited no curiosity.

The strangely striped skin and opalescent eyes of an imprisoned boa, and the hideous flat snout of a wrinkled alligator, seemed to call public attention wholly away from the feathery beauty of the birds. And the rich, ruddy, golden glow of the evening sun seemed to gild the mottled folds of the serpent, to bronze the scaly hide of the giant lizard, and to lend a certain tropical splendor to the lustrous plumage of the brilliant-feathered parrots—making one dream of warmer skies, regions equatorial, groves of sandalwood and palm trees, strange architecture and strange peoples. But those weird, opalescent eyes, that ghastly saurian head, provoked one to deeper reveries—either reptile could boast of an ancestral history even more ancient than that of man; either creature had once received divine honors from Man himself; both saurian and ophidian had been held sacred by mighty civilizations long since passed away; the trail of the serpent glistens through all the mazes of all mythologies, and the tracks of the crocodile may be traced through the pages of history the most ancient. So that a peep through the dingy glass sufficed to evoke thoughts of Homer and Hesiod, of the Vedas and the Erbyggia Saga, of Fire Worship and the Zendavesta, of Egyptian hieroglyphics and Aztec picture writing, of biblical prophesy and apocryphal revelations, and even of the prehistoric eras of mundane history revealed in the great stony tablets of geology.

The serpent has indeed a most ancient and wondrous history, dating from the earliest ages of old-world civilization, and extending even further back into the dim eras of

which mythology alone gives us a shadowy record. From those prehistoric times to the very birth of Christianity and beyond it, the serpent was honored of men above other forms of life. Its image, carved on obelisks, painted on tiles, written on papyrus scrolls, molded in clay or metal, engraved in ivory or brass, stamped on kingly seals or traced on hierophantic letters, figures in the earliest hieroglyphs, even as in the most modern alphabets. As Massey forcibly observes in his essay on the Serpent-symbol, "it lives and hisses in our letter 'S'—the only true hieroglyph, perhaps, in the modern English alphabet. It writhes amid the cuneiform inscriptions and strange bas reliefs of Assyrian monuments; among the half weird, brightly colored paintings in the pyramid chambers and palace halls of ruined Egypt; about the grotesque idol fanes of Hindostan; in the unperspective painting within Chinese pagodas; and in the fantastic art of Japanese temple decorators. Its claims to divinity are not altogether to be despised, inasmuch as they are granted by the oldest scriptures and the earliest religions—sometimes as symbolizing the principle of Evil, sometimes the principle of Goodness, but ever as a form chosen by some deity who is feared or worshiped. It was sacred to Isis and Cneph in the hierophantic rites of Egypt; it figures in the earliest Phallic worship of Egypt, India and the "most eastern East"; it takes ample part in the monstrous mythologies of Cannibal Oceanica; it winds amid those of Mexico and Peru, and many of the American races of red men; it figures in Hebrew legend as the symbol of the Evil Principle—always excepting the story of the Brazen Serpent in the wilderness—and in the old Chaldee religion, and the early sun-worship appears to have exacted reverence as the living emblem of a dark and dreadful

deity; in Rome and Greece we find it revered as sacred to Æsculapius, but it also figures horribly in the history of the Three Gorgons, of the Erinnyes, of Laocoon; it appears in one form or other throughout the Norse Eddas—whether encircling the earth as Jormungand, or as writhing around the roots of Yggdrasil, or as vomiting forth floods of venom within the Hall of Serpents in Nastroud the dismal; it has ever been the symbol of divination in all ages of magic; it coiled about the black tresses of the ancient Pythonesses as a living crown—a strangely mystical fashion, indeed, this of crowning the priestess with a serpent. The beauty of the ophidian seems to have been recognized from the earliest times; for snake designs in jewelry have been the most common of all designs with the gold workers and ivory carvers of ancient civilizations, and it is but a short time since the present writer remembers to have seen a bracelet not very dissimilar to that which Oliver Wendell Holmes makes Elsie Venner, the woman-serpent, wear, namely, a viper formed in links of gold, holding its tail in its mouth, and looking about it with threatening eyes of emerald. Four thousand years ago the same kind of bracelet encircled the dusky arc of some Egyptian beauty, who loved transparent dresses of gauzy material; the cobra coiled in gold through the dark hair of Indian dancing-girls before the Mongol conquest, and the wanton Assyrian girls seemed to have loved serpent jewelry in ivory or gold. And the old architects, too, fully appreciated the beauty of the serpent form, as the wrecks of dead cities attest. It is not improbable that John Martin's ideal Pandemonium, into whose infernal architecture the serpent form enters so largely and so admirably, had something very much like a material prototype in the architecture of certain giant cit-

ies of the East, now buried under mounds of ruin. Before the Mahometan conquest of Constantinople, when that city was fairer even than imperial Rome, when its streets presented level vistas of double porticos supported by seemingly endless colonnades, when its beauties equaled the grandest architectural dreams of Martin, Turner, or Doré, among its most famous monuments were two enormous columns of polished porphyry around which twined brazen serpents of prodigious length and size. Shattered column capitals decorated with serpent designs not altogether unlike those Doré loves to cap the pillars of Hell's gates with, have, we believe, been discovered in certain Oriental ruins. Snake heads of stone or wood, monstrous and hideously grotesque, are not uncommon in old Gothic architecture and quaint mediæval carvings. Ancient and mediæval furniture, too, was frequently decorated with serpent designs.

But the serpent was not only thus recognized by architects and carvers and artists and jewelers, not only does it figure in hierophantic mysteries and dead religions and throughout the history of magic. Above all animal forms, that of the serpent figures most largely in legend and fable and history—and almost always in a mystic manner. Moncure D. Conway, whose researches on this subject have been more extensive perhaps than those of any other scholar in the same direction, can best discourse to you of serpent-history from the earliest time to the era of mediæval dragon-legend. Even into the most modern literature of romance and poetry the serpent enters. Witness at random Coleridge's *Geraldine*,<sup>1</sup> which Swinburne criticises as even a grander poem than *The Ancient Mariner*; Wendell Holmes' *Elsie Venner*, one of the strangest and sweetest stories in

<sup>1</sup> I. e., *Christabel*.



American fiction; Lord Lytton's nightmare-tale, *The Haunted and the Haunters*,—a story of a man-serpent, a mighty mesmerizer, whose eyes, glittering and green as the emerald, exercise a fascination of supernatural force and horror. And the position occupied by the serpent in mythology and art and history and literature is, we surmise, largely attributable to the Mystery of the Serpent—to certain enigmas in its natural history which even modern science has not wholly succeeded in solving. To the ancients there was food for marvel in the very motion of the reptile—its progress seemed the result of volition alone, like the flitting of a specter; there was food for marvel, too, in the deadliness of its bite; in the awful fascination of its ghastly eyes, in its extraordinary ability to live without water or food; and above all, in the wondrous tenacity of life in its bloodless coils. Then there was much of mystery, too, in the creature's love of dark lurking places, in its extreme susceptibility to heat, in its torpor during the cold season—from which facts, perhaps, certain unpleasant inferences as to its infernal origin were drawn. Probably it was honored in the well known Symbol of Eternity by reason of its peculiar vitality.

We, of to-day, reverence the serpent but little. Much of its mysterious life has been wholly robbed of mystery by the researches of ophiologists during the last decade. Weir Mitchell dares to deny the power of fascination to the rattlesnake, and Professor Nicholson, of Her Britannic Majesty's Indian Service, actually asserts that the old story about the boa crushing and beslaving its victim ere engulfing it, is a popular fallacy. However, it is gratifying at least to know that either assertion is contradicted on equally good medical authority; and the writer of these

lines, only a few days since, conversed with professional serpent hunters, who testify to having seen the boa beslime its prey all over in the good old way, and also interviewed a lady who had been fascinated by a snake. But there remains a mystery about the reptile which no ophiologist has ever claimed to have elucidated—the dark mystery of snake venom. And this mystery led us to dream of India.

Whether it is that our poisonous serpents are less active, or less deadly, or less numerous, it seems that deaths from snake-bite are of rare occurrence in the States. In Hindostan, the annual number of victims from snake-bites figure high up in the tens of thousands. Deaths from the bite of Australian snakes are more common than are deaths from the bites of American snakes, but far less numerous than fatal casualties of a similar nature in British India. The venom of all the Australian snakes, whether tiger, copperhead, whip, broom, gray, black, ring or death adder, seems not more deadly than that of our own rattlesnake or copperhead, and the physiological symptoms attendant upon the bite of either varieties seem to vary but little. But under the sun of India venom seems to ferment to peculiar virulence; and the effects of an Indian snake-bite are sometimes very peculiar. The rapidity with which death follows would seem almost incredible to an American frontiersman, who regards the rattlesnake as the prince of poison snakes. So rapid is the poison of the cobra that few cases are ever brought into the English hospitals; they die on the way. A poor Sudra's wife was bitten in a rice plantation by a cobra. Her husband attempted to carry her back to the house, but his strength failed him, and leaving her in the field, he ran for help. "But when I came back," he exclaimed pathetically, "the ants had begun to eat her face." The effect of

the cobra's poison resembles that produced by an intense narcotic; deep sleep ensues rapidly. That of the daboia, or Russell viper, another Indian reptile, is followed by profuse bleeding from every pore of the external or internal mucous membrane. Consequently, the victim bleeds from nose and mouth, eyes and internal organs, and dies in convulsions, vomiting blood. It seems that the viper-venom liquefies the blood so that the natural vessels can no longer hold. The venom of other Indian snakes produces temporary blindness and deafness. Excepting the extremely poisonous ophiophagus, or serpent-eating snake, a monster that grows to fifteen feet in length, and attacks all living things with peculiar ferocity, the cobra is the most feared of all Indian reptiles. Nicholson asserts that cobra poison is six times more deadly than the poison of any Australian snake; and cobras in India appear to be more numerous than grasshoppers. The English Government attempted to exterminate the reptiles by offering a reward for every cobra killed; but after 1,250,000 cobras had been killed in one year, at a cost of \$80,000 to the Government, it was determined to pay rewards only for tigers killed. It is amusing to learn that the Government was prompted to this course partly by the discovery that numbers of the natives had speculated largely in cobra-breeding with a view to future rewards.

Modern chemistry knows little of organic poisons, especially venom; it cannot discover their presence in the blood, or account for their effect upon the tissues,—indeed, many snake-poisons leave no trace of their presence in the blood. The effect of daboia-poison is an exception; but nevertheless whether the blood coagulates or liquefies, the presence of the venom is not microscopically discoverable.

Some hold the poison to be septic in its nature, others deny it putrefiant power. It is not likely that anything short of a prodigious advance in microscopic science can ever throw light upon the mystery; and it seems somewhat odd that professional poisoners have not given more attention to a fatal agent at once so virulent and so difficult to trace in the blood or stomach of a victim, as serpent venom. A knowledge of the nature of this strange toxic principle which resides in the salivary secretions of ophidians would, of course, prove of vast value to the medical profession; and for years the most learned professors of the healing art have been vainly endeavoring to solve the secret. Nicholson, Fayrer, and Short, in Hindostan; Halford, in Australia; and Weir Mitchell, in America, are among the most famous of modern ophiologists; but they all appear to be no more enlightened as to the mystery of snake-poison than were the Greek myth-makers, who told of snakes created by the blood-drops that fell from the severed head of Medusa, when Perseus' winged sandals bore him over the wastes of Libya.

Still, the curious researches of these scholars are well worthy of attention—especially, perhaps, those of Weir Mitchell on rattlesnake venom; and their results as published by the Smithsonian Institute are highly interesting. Firstly, we learn from the Professor that the venom can be tasted and swallowed without danger—that is, so long as no abrasion of the mucous membrane exists; the gastric juices appear to neutralize it. Fifteen drops of venom and even more are frequently secreted in either poison-sac; the fluid varies in color from orange or straw color, to emerald green; it is tasteless and scentless, although apparently acid,

inasmuch as it reddens Litmus paper; it is toxically unaltered by freezing or boiling; when fluid it has about the consistency of a thick solution of gum-acacia, and will sink in water; when dried, it resembles albumen in color and density, but dries in thin layers traversed by tiny cracks, which Professor Mead supposes to be the edges of crystals peculiar to the secretion. But whether orange or emerald, dry or fluid, boiled or frozen, it is equally fatal. Age even has no effect upon its influence. A dried flake left for years in a phial will produce death as speedily as poison fresh from the fangs. There may, however, be conditions of the blood, it would seem, when venom may be brought in contact with it safely; for it is said that in Cuba inoculation with snake-venom for the cure of yellow fever is not uncommon or unsuccessful. But under ordinary conditions, either vegetables or animals inoculated with the poison wither and die. Mitchell's qualitative analysis of crotalus-venom results in the discovery that it is composed of the following substances:

1. An albuminoid body, which he terms *crotaline*, not coagulable at 212° F.
2. An albuminoid body coagulable at 212° F.
3. Soluble coloring and undetermined substances.
4. A trace of fatty matter; salts, chlorides and phosphates.

The toxic principle of the secretion is found in the substance the Professor calls *crotaline*; but chemistry has failed so far to discover any trace of *crotaline* in the blood of animals killed by it. So that after several hundred chemical experiments the serpent continues to keep the secret of its deadly power. The recent researches of ophiologists have

thrown light, however, on a vast array of curious facts regarding the habits of thanatophidia and their phallic and mythological history.

Whether the proprietor of the variegated monster, which inspired our revery, desired to illustrate the remarkable contrast of the Scriptural admonition, "Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves," we omitted to ask; but we were forcibly impressed by the exhibition of just such a contrast in the window of his bird-store. Above the glass case, where the subtlest and weirdest of speechless things lay coiled upon cushions of crimson cloth like a serpent deity on his throne, there hung a pretty green cage where a pair of pink-footed doves, "with purple ripples on their necks," were celebrating their perpetual honeymoon; innocently making love under at least twenty pairs of human eyes—not to speak of canary, macaw, oriole, and parrot eyes—nestling bosom to bosom, playfully biting each other's necks, first closing one eye and then the other, and suddenly opening the semi-transparent lids just as a coquettish woman closes her eyes that her lover may fondly tease her to reopen them. The awful presence of the jewel-eyed serpent below, coiled up in that mystic open-eyed slumber typical of the Python-woman's trance of divination, seemed to disturb them not at all. It was Adam and Eve in Eden, with Lucifer lurking near.

But there was finer food for revery in the contrast; the accident or caprice which placed the glass case and green cage in such noticeable proximity suggested a train of thoughts historical and mythological. Following the vast history of the serpent through all its innumerable ramifications in the mazy labyrinth of ancient histories and buried mythologies, we find it ever connected in some sort, how-

ever loosely, with the history of the dove. Wherever the serpent symbolized the power of evil, of darkness, of divination by foul magic, of astrology; wherever its presence spoke of human sacrifice, of snakily-crawling streams of blood, of rites too dark and hideous to bear the light of day,—there do we always find the dove a symbol of divine goodness, of virtue, of brightness celestial. In Genesis the white dove bears the olive branch to Noah; but the serpent bears the apple to Eve; and through all hierophantic history the former signifies mercy and goodness, the latter malevolence and evil; the former the goodness of the Creator, the latter the wickedness of Satan. The great dragon, the mighty serpent of the Scriptures, is none other than Lucifer himself; but the dove is the Spirit of God, the “Holy Ghost.” Thus was the dove a favorite device with those early Christians who painted and carved the slabs which covered the entombed bodies of their martyrs in the catacombs of Rome. While the dove symbolized the purity and gentleness of innocence and virtue, the serpent was the symbol of the wisdom which is cunning, the knowledge which is not God-given. However the serpent was worshiped, it was always as the emblem of something to be dreaded; even when sacred to Æsculapius the reverence paid it embraced the idea of a weird magic. The snakes of the Furies, of the Gorgons, or of Pluto’s shadowy realm, coiling about the dark throne, seem appropriately situated; but the dove might sun its snowy bosom on the crystal battlements of the heavenly city, and find a home in Olympus. But it was as the living emblem of love, the perfect love which casteth out fear, that the dove obtained the love and worship of man; while the serpent was worshiped yet feared as the living emblem of hate. Classic mythology consecrated the

doves to sweet Venus herself; they were sacred to her altar; they circled in the sunshine about the snowy columns of her fairest temples; they built their little nests in her holy fanes; and, yoked with reins of softest silk, drew her chariot through the blue empyrean. Perhaps the deep purple mark on their soft necks is of sacred origin, the trace of their celestial harness. Evidently the dove was a home pet with the ancients, as it is with us to-day; for it enters into a vast number of the frescoes and "distemper" paintings of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the deep colors so loved by the ancient fresco-painters afforded beautiful relief to the pale fawn-color of its plumage. In fresco border designs it is found most commonly; but it is often the sole figure in a large panel—a pale spot against a ground of deep blue, garnet-red, or dark green. Perched upon a nuptial couch, whose curtains are drawn aside by naked torch-bearing cupids, the dove symbolizes the sacredness of marriage in a celebrated Herculaneum fresco. And the dove designs of these old Roman painters are all exclusively pretty. The ancient mind, keenly æsthetic, felt that of all feathered beauties none is fairer than the simple dove to look upon. So that, taking all things into consideration, the dove has even more reason to feel proud of her history than has the serpent to feel vain of his ancestry. As to beauty, it cannot, indeed, be said that the serpent lacks beauty either of form or color—a strange, magical beauty, like that of the chameleon; and among the many varieties of asps, adders, snakes, serpents, etc., we may find ophidians of every hue—golden-green, burning yellow, velvety black, ashy pale, livid-like dead flesh, warmly pink-like palpitating meat under the butcher's knife, variegated as the plumage of a paroquet, bronze-black, as though exuding phosphorescent slime. In-



fernal beauty, nevertheless; and not comparable, we think, with the stately but innocent grace of a pair of fawn-colored doves, who are at this writing trotting slowly about our desk, after a fashion which makes one dream of soft-eyed mediæval ladies, in long-trained, close-fitting robes of rich, pale silk, and pink slippers, walking side by side through some old castle hall, lighted by oriel windows. We must not forget to mention that Ovid calls doves *cythereidas*, from Cytheria, or Aphrodite, the foam-born queen of love; and for a similar reason they have been classically termed paphiæ, or Paphian birds, from the Paphian Venus.

Thinking of Paphian doves naturally led us to dream of Paphian mysteries; and we were wondering whether those rites were really so wicked after all, and whether the worship of Venus was celebrated by white-robed crowds with all the solemnity of Alma Tadema's sacrificial paintings, and what kind of people the priests of Venus, not to mention the priestesses, were, when our dream was abruptly broken by the alligator in the window. It had poked its horrid flat nose some distance through the bars at the top of its cage, and the proprietor of the bird store saluted the protruding snout with a smart rap of his cane. The head was immediately withdrawn; but all the old Egyptian deities in Hades must have frowned black at the sacrilegious act, although the alligator be but cousin to the sacred crocodile of the holy Nile. Nor would the deities, many-headed and many-armed, who dwell in the rock temples of further India and by the waters of the Ganges pass the matter by without comment; for the sacred history of the crocodile is of most remote antiquity, wherefore all members of his vast family are certainly entitled to some share of respect. Was not the crocodile worshiped by ancient civilizations?—was

not the Egyptian city of Crocodilopolis built and named in his honor?—were not palaces built for him to dwell in, and pyramids and catacombs for his burial?—do we not find his remains in Egypt to-day preserved in tombs of immemorial age by the embalmer's art? Why, historians say that the Nile belonged to him once—that it was only at the risk of life that one dared to draw water from or wash in the sacred river! Herodotus can tell you other queer things about the worship of the reptile, its habits, and its inability to move its lower jaw, which latter assertion every one to-day knows to be untrue. Among the curiosities unearthed from the ruins of dead Egypt, toy alligators of painted wood, made for naughty little Egyptian children to break, have been found; and the lower jaw, not the upper, moves, which shows that even the Egyptian did not share in the anatomical error of Herodotus. But that little calumny of the old Greek was not nearly so sacrilegious as that rap inflicted by the cane of the bird-store proprietor on the sacred nose of the crocodile's cousin. The sound of that rap fairly broke up our reverie.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The omitted conclusion of this article is an interview with the proprietor of the store about the prices of the animals for sale. The editor.

## NOTES ON THE UTILIZATION OF HUMAN REMAINS

While visiting a friend, some short time since, in a well known Main street leather warehouse, it was our good fortune to form the acquaintance of one of those good people whom reporters delight to meet with,—a man of strange and varied experiences. This person was an English tanner, quite a fine old fellow with a magnificent muscular development, who had in other years enjoyed considerable reputation as a boxer, and who never tired of discoursing upon the various styles of pugilism characteristic of the most famous masters of the art of self-defense. As we watched the remarkable dexterity with which he handled those huge double-handed knives used by tanners to plane off fibrous refuse from hides, it naturally occurred to us to question him in regard to many interesting facts connected with his business; and in the course of the conversation that followed he informed us that the most delicate job which ever fell to his lot was the dressing of a human skin. “I was quite a young man at the time,” he said, “and was working at my trade near Islington, London. They brought us the hide of some murderer to convert into dressed leather; and all the lads who worked in the building took a turn at the job—just for the sake of being able to say that they helped tan a human skin. It was a large skin, for the murderer had been a powerful fellow; but his hide was not very stout, and required careful handling. It made a beautiful, soft leather, of a pale color; and I believe that a portion of it was afterward used to bind books with. The doc-

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tors had got hold of the fellow's body; and, if I remember right some of them took a fancy to get the skin tanned and bind some medical volumes with it. But the thing happened about thirty-seven years ago, and I quite forget what the man was hung for. Of course, the leather was very thin and delicate; thinner than sheepskins even over the belly,—that's where a man's skin is thickest, you know. I don't think they could have put it to any other use than to bind books with, unless, perhaps, by converting it into parchment in the first instance. It was quite soft and pretty when we got through with it."

This little incident conjured up in our minds a train of historical reminiscences illustrating the extraordinary variety of methods in which the remains of the dead have been utilized since the most ancient times; and the reader will probably find them interesting. The sacrilegious use of human skin by priests and magicians, we need scarcely observe, is of the greatest antiquity; and the awful reverence in which the human corpse was ever held by the most ancient peoples naturally led them to regard those who violated its rest with superstitious horror. This feeling was strengthened by the old hierophantic sorcerers and in more modern times by professors of the Black Art, who found that dabbling in the fetid corruption of charnel houses enabled them the better to practice upon the fears of the ignorant and credulous. The early physicians were popularly regarded as half wizards, less because of their cure than because of their anatomical studies.

"I have made candles of dead men's fat;  
The sextons have been my slaves;  
I have bottled babes unborn, and dried  
Hearts and livers from rifled graves."

—says Southey's dying doctor in *The Surgeon's Warning*, a ballad whereof the ghostly sentiments thoroughly coincide with the sentiments entertained toward members of the medical profession by some of the Old-World peasantry to-day. But, above all others, the mediæval sorcerer was held most skilled in the knowledge of all diabolical uses to which the human corpse might be adapted. He made parchment from human skin, and pens out of dead men's nails, wherewith magical characters were written in thick blood. As the ballad says:

“On the study table a book there lay,  
Which Agrippa himself had been reading that day;  
The leaves they were made of dead men's skin,  
And the characters written with blood therein.”

The same superstitions regarding the remains of the dead which magicians took such advantage of, doubtless prompted cruel conquerors to the most ignominious treatment of the corpses of their victims; and we find that the most outrageous violations of the sanctity of death were always perpetrated by conquerors. A famous Tartar Khan, it will be remembered, ordered the dead body of an illustrious enemy to be flayed and the skin made into a saddle. Sapor, the Parthian, having defeated the Roman army (260 A. D.) and captured the Emperor Valerianus, held him captive for two years, subjecting him to all insults and disgrace that could be heaped upon him. After the miserable Emperor's death, Sapor had the body flayed and the skin skillfully stuffed—a hideous trophy which hung for many years in one of the Parthian temples. The Aztecs, according to Garcilusso de la Vega, were wont to flay their captives

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and convert the skin into drums, which were always vigorously drummed upon at the beginning of an engagement. It was believed that the kindred of the dead captives, on hearing the thunder of these ghastly drums, would forthwith be seized with panic and flee. On other occasions, after the captives had been killed and flayed, their skins, yet reeking with blood, were sent to illustrious Aztec Chiefs, who clothed themselves in the gory hides and marched about the streets demanding contributions from the people. This was kept up until the skins became rotten, and the contributions received by the wearers were devoted to pious purposes. The Turks of the middle ages often lined their bucklers with human skin, believing the shield thereafter impervious to weapons; and several bucklers thus lined were some years ago on exhibition at Bologna. A book bound in human skin is, we believe, to be found in the possession of a gentleman living in Boston. And, before closing our notes on the uses of human skin, we must not forget to recall to the reader's mind that ludicrous will of a patriotic New Englander (not long since published in nearly all the daily papers), wherein may be found a provision to the effect that the corpse of the deceased be flayed and the skin made into a drumhead, and that Yankee Doodle be played thereon every Fourth of July, at sunrise, in the shadow of Bunker Hill Monument. Whether the extraordinary provisions of this will have yet been in any part fulfilled we have not been able to learn.

There is undoubted proof that the fat or lard of dead men has been utilized in a very ghastly manner even within very recent years; but the origin of the custom is of great antiquity. Only a few days ago a brother journalist, with

whom we happened to converse about candles made from human fat, related to us a curious experience of his at North Vernon, Indiana. He had taken quarters one night last winter at a small hostelry in that town; and while sitting in the bar-room down stairs, ere retiring, he overheard a very odd conversation between some of the boarders. One of these, a peddler, related to his companions that burglars had entered his house on one occasion, had ransacked every room, had entered the bedchamber where he and his wife slept, had forced open all the drawers, had taken their wearing apparel to another room, and turned all the pockets inside out in search of plunder, had stolen a watch and revolver from beneath the pillow, had in fact robbed the house in the most scientific and systematic style, and all this without awaking anybody. The victimized narrator concluded by remarking that he was naturally a light sleeper, and the whole affair was very mysterious—he could not understand it. On this a Polish Jew present observed with a dark and forbidding smile that the mystery was very easily explained,—the robbers had certainly gone through the house with candles made from the fat of a dead man, and the stupefying fumes of those wizard tapers made the sleepers sleep more deeply. No one could move or speak in the room where such candles were burnt; but the Jew acknowledged or pretended ignorance of the recipe for the manufacture of such candles.

Well, such a recipe has been given to the world by Grose; and some of our readers have, perhaps, met with it in the notes to Southey's *Thalaba*. It is very curious; and for the benefit of those who may not have met with it, we venture to transcribe it whole:

## "THE HAND OF GLORY

"Take the hand, left or right, of a person hanged and exposed on the highway; wrap it up in a piece of shroud or winding-sheet, in which let it be well squeezed to get out any small quantity of blood that may have remained in it; then put it into an earthen vessel with Zimat saltpeter, salt and long pepper, the whole well powdered; leave it fifteen days in that vessel; afterwards take it out and expose it to the noontide sun in the dog-days till it is thoroughly dry, and if the sun is not sufficient, put it into an oven heated with fern and vervain. Then compose a kind of candle *with the fat of a hanged man*, virgin wax and sisame of Lapland. The Hand of Glory is used as a candle-stick to hold this candle when lighted. Its properties are that, wheresoever any one goes with this dreadful instrument, the person to whom it is presented will be deprived of all power of motion."

This superstition is said to flourish in Spain, France and Germany. But they say that if the door of a dwelling be anointed with a grease made from "the gall of a black cat, the fat of a white hen, and the blood of a screech-owl," the candle made of dead men's fat will not avail. Torquemada, the historian, relates that the Mexican thieves use a similar charm to serve them on housebreaking expeditions. They took with them the left hand and arm of a woman who had died in her first childbed, and with this they struck the ground in front of the house they wished to rob once, the door twice, and the threshold twice. The inmates of the dwelling thereupon were supposed to be thrown into an enchanted sleep. Ointments of human fat were known to mediæval professors of the magic art.

Human skulls have been used for a variety of profane purposes in all ages. According to Hippocrates, the savage Scythians not only scalped their enemies, but used their



skulls as drinking vessels; and these vessels were not lined with silver, like Byron's famous cup. The chief use, however, to which skulls have been put was that of ornamentation in the decoration of ancient temples, or in the celebration of vast triumphs. Every student of history knows how Tamerlane marked the course of his conquest by pyramids of skulls; how he erected a tower of ninety thousand heads on the ruins of Bagdad, and a pyramid of seventy thousand in the city of Ispahan; and how, after having carried a small town, which had defended itself with unexampled vigor, by storm, enough heads were not found to build the hideous monument of victory to its usual height—so that layers of wet clay had to be placed between each row of bloody skulls. The great teocalli, (or temple) of Quetzalcoatl, at Mexico, was adorned in the days of Aztec glory with a vast wooden framework whereon were strung the skulls of the victims offered up in sacrifice upon the War God's altars. One of Cortez's Spanish-soldiers took the trouble to count the number of these frightful trophies, and he asserted that there were over one hundred and thirty thousand of them. Various monster divinities of Hindoo mythology are adorned with necklaces of skulls; and in many of the temples of Oceanica the skulls of the captives, whose flesh had furnished a triumphal banquet for their conquerors, were hung upon the shrines of the cannibal gods, or laid before the grotesque and hideous idols therein. At Ashanti the skulls of slaughtered captives were at one time used to ornament the great war drum of the nation in the Koomassee; and when Sir Charles McCarthy, the unfortunate English officer who perished in an ill-planned and ill-fated expedition against the Ashantees, started for the river Prah, the black King sent him word that he soon hoped to

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fasten his head to the great war drum of Ashantee. And when the English force had been cut to pieces, and Sir Charles McCarthy's heart eaten by the ferocious natives, his bones were brought to Koomassee, and his head for a long time decorated the big drum.

Human brains have been in all ages esteemed a great delicacy by cannibals; but they have been otherwise utilized. According to a very curious and quaint Irish history which fell into our hands by a lucky chance, we learn that certain ancient chieftains of the Celtic race actually converted the brains of their enemies into formidable offensive weapons. The brains were hardened to the consistency of limestone by some peculiar process, which petrified without destroying form; the ball of brains thus burdened was attached to a powerful leathern thong, and used as a missile with deadly effect. The accounts of the frightful slaughter inflicted with these balls of brains by some of the savage Irish chieftains is vividly described in the legendary chronicle referred to.

Human bones, however, must have entered into the manufacture of deadly weapons much more largely than human brains. Whether thigh bones have ever been converted into clubs we cannot positively say; but it would seem that no bone in the whole human framework is of sufficient solidity and weight to warrant such use, especially when in competition with stouter and more durable material. But human bone is not infrequently used in spear-points and barbed missiles by savage tribes. Some years ago in a private museum at Bangor, North Wales, the writer was shown a number of beautifully wrought lances and javelins brought from various places in the South Seas, which were partly barbed (he was informed) with splinters of human bone. These

splinters had been skillfully carved to the shape desired, and delicately notched with tiny barbs, like the teeth of a tiny saw on either side. A lance sixteen feet long was one of the most curious objects in the collection. It had a long shaft of springy black wood, polished like ebony, and within a foot from the point the lance had a quadrilateral shape, so as to admit of four rows of barbs. There must have been not less than one hundred barbs, principally of sharks' teeth, beautifully fastened on with strong twine; and the long splinter of serrated bone which tipped the terrible weapon was said to have been taken from a human victim. Carvings in human bone have, we believe, been at various times exhibited in museums.

But the manufacture of human bone into utensils of various kinds has not been practiced by savages alone. The skill of Capuchin monks in this ghastly art is well known. Almost every well read person knows something of the Convent near Palermo, where all the dead bodies of dead members of the Capuchin order were placed in niches arrayed in frock, cowl and cord; where the walls of certain chambers were decorated with ghastly designs in bones and skulls, and where quantities of furniture—tables, chairs, stools, etc.,—were manufactured from fragments of skeletons.

The bones of soldiers slain in battle have been often used by irreverential farmers to manure their lands with, and for other profane purposes. The bones of the Teutons slaughtered by the legionaries of Marius, near the present site of Aix in Provence, were so utilized, it is said; and the traces of that vast massacre are apparent even at this day, according to Ampere. The spot was called the Place of Corruption for years, and the name of the village

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of La Pourriere is said to be a corruption of *la pourriture* (putridity). It is also said that the bones of the 140,000 Cimbri, slain on the Randian Fields, near where Vercial in Piedmont now stands, were long used for farm-fence purposes.

The strangest, and by far the most horrible use, however, to which the bones of the dead have been put, is that of human food. The most famous instance of this ghoulish cannibalism on record is afforded, we believe, in the history of the sixth siege of Paris, subsequent to the assassination of Henry III by a monk in the very camp of the besiegers. The struggle was characterized by all the determined fanaticism and ferocity of a religious war; the siege was protracted to a duration of nearly five years, and thousands upon thousands of the inhabitants of Paris perished of famine. Henry of Navarre finally cut off the unfortunate city's provisions by a thorough circumvallation; but the fanaticism of the Catholic League protracted the siege until long after resistance had become hopeless. The bark of trees, grass, the skins of animals, rats, and even the leather of old shoes, were devoured by the starving besieged with avidity, and sold at prodigious prices. All the horrors of the last days of Jerusalem were re-enacted. As in the days of Titus, mothers fed upon the flesh of their children; the dead bodies lying in the streets were riven asunder and devoured by crowds of starving men, rendered hyenas by insane hunger; and wolves wandered in the public ways of the city. Then the Spanish Ambassador of the League advised that the bones of the dead should be disinterred from the public cemeteries, ground into a bone-flour (not very dissimilar to the fertilizer now manufactured at Si Keck's stink-factory), and made into bread. The tombs gave up

their dead, and the resting places of the dead were violated, and the slimy worms robbed of their food. The frightful bread was made, distributed, and eagerly devoured; but all who ate it became afflicted with strange and hideous disorders which no man had ever before heard of, and which no physician could heal.

This use of human bone as diet recalls the fact that certain Indian tribes in Peru and Guatemala were accustomed, after having consumed the bodies of their caciques on a funeral pile, to mingle the sacred ashes with water and drink them. Instances are not wanting in history of faithful widows drinking the ashes of their dead consorts. Powdered skulls were given as medicine by mediæval physicians. In the same collection of curious nostrums we find that the "bones of a young man who had not been dead more than a year" recommended as sacrificial medicine.

These things naturally lead us to the very ancient subject of cannibalism, in which bones, blood, brains, marrow and all figure quite extensively. We know nothing reliable concerning the ancient Anthropophagi, and the men whose heads did grow beneath their shoulders, and the monstrous man-eaters of mythology. But every schoolboy has read something about Carib cannibalism and the Anthropophagi of the South Seas; the men who ate Captain Cook for showing a shameful lack of respect to their idols, and the ferocious Fijians, who kept a catalogue of the victims whose flesh they had dined upon by rows of stones. A recent traveler avers that a young chief showed him a vast row of great stones, saying that his father had eaten as many men as there were stones in the row, whereupon the traveler took pains to count the stones, and found there were more than five hundred of them. Many famous cannibal chiefs of

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Fiji are said to have died from diseases produced by the use of human flesh, which all cannibals agree tastes like first-class pork, but has a bad effect upon the bowels. Baring-Gould, in the first volume of his work on the *Origin of Religious Belief*, speaks of cannibalism as a necessary evil, if we recollect aright. He claims, on good scientific authority, that man naturally requires a carnivorous diet, and inasmuch as no mammalia are indigenous to the South Seas—even the pig having been introduced—the extinction of the native race was prevented only by cannibalism. This sounds very well; but there are other authors of considerable weight who trace the most hideous, incurable and nameless diseases with which the modern race is afflicted, to the practice of eating human flesh. However, it must be acknowledged that although cannibalism would appear in some instances to have been attended with the most hideous results, in the majority of cases the Anthropophagi of the South Seas appear to have flourished on the ghastly diet. The Tahitians, New Zealanders, Tongans, Fijians, New Caledonians and other tribes are remarkable for fine physique; and the diseases of leprosy and elephantiasis which prevail among some of the races of Oceanica are not traceable to cannibalism—in fact the said diseases have become far more fatal and widespread in those localities where civilization has crushed out cannibalism. Among some certain tribes of African Anthropophagi, where human flesh is said to be sold in the butchers' shops, leprosy and other odd diseases appear to be unknown. The custom of devouring human flesh is not wholly a savage one—in the literal meaning of the word—for a Nation as highly civilized as the Aztecs appears to have been extensively addicted to it. Portions of the bodies of their sacrificed captives were al-

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ways devoured by the worshipers of Quetzalcoatl with hierophantic ceremony and solemnity. The Mexican priests were also wont on certain occasions to knead a paste, made of maize and human blood, into the figure of an idol, which was eaten as a sacrificial rite—something after the fashion of the Roman Catholic “communion.” The hearts of victims were frequently eaten by the priests, who tore them, still palpitating, from the breasts of the captives. Instances of cannibalism in far more highly civilized communities are not unknown, even in modern times; generally originating in the promptings of mental disease; occasionally in a monstrous curiosity, as displayed in the case of that English medical student who cooked and ate a steak cut from a body in his dissecting-room, and was therefor banished from the University.

Compulsory cannibalism was sometimes favored by the mediæval torturers. When George Dozsa, leader of the revolt of the Hungarian peasants against the Magyar nobles, in the latter part of the fifteenth century, was defeated and captured, he was sentenced to have the flesh torn from his bones with red-hot pincers; and a number of his followers, who had been purposely kept without food for several days, were compelled to eat it. There are still more horrible incidents in history of compulsory cannibalism—such as the forcing of a prisoner by torture to devour a part of his own flesh. In a very clever article on *Sacrificial Medicine*, which appeared in last month's *Cornhill*, the writer calls attention to the advocacy of cannibalism by a royal English physician only two centuries ago. There is a recipe in the works of the said physician for a “mummial quintessence,” to be made of flesh from the thighs of “a sound young man dying a natural death about the middle of August,” which “mum-

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mial quintessence" was to be eaten with spirits of wine and salt; also, a recipe for a wonderful tonic, to be made from the blood of a sound young man dying in springtime.

The custom of feeding animals upon human flesh was not very uncommon with the ancients—we need not dwell upon the manner in which the wild beasts of the Roman amphitheaters were fed. There is an anecdote related of Caligula by the Augustan historians, which will be found interesting in this connection. The wild beasts kept for the public games wanted food badly upon one occasion, and the Emperor was duly apprised of the fact. He at once visited the neighboring prisons, and ordered the prisoners to be marched out in single file. There were two bald men in the line. "Tell them off," finally exclaimed the monster, "from the bald man to the bald man," and all in that portion of the dismal procession, numbering perhaps fifty, were flung as living food to the hungry lions and leopards of the arena. Now few of these men had even been tried by law, but were awaiting trial for small offenses.

Classic mythology tells us of a king who fed his horses on human flesh, and there is record of certain fiendish Rajahs who trained elephants to swallow man-meat. The greater part of the bodies of those who were sacrificed in the Aztec *teocallis* were thrown to wild beasts kept within the temple inclosures, after the skin had been removed and the tidbits laid aside. Bernal Diaz says that the Mexicans kept not only panthers and other wild beasts for this purpose, but that the bodies were also given to serpents "which had something at the end of their tails that sounded like morrisbells," and the hissing of which "made one think of hell." These beasts and reptiles seem to have been kept



about the teocallis with the same object for which hogs are kept in our own slaughterhouses.

Tamerlane had certainly as little respect for the human body as any man who ever lived. We have already alluded to his skull-towers and pyramids of heads; but it seems that he occasionally varied the monotony of this style of architecture by other horrors. When his unnumberable hordes had overrun the province of Khorassan, the garrison of the rebellious town Sebsewar, numbering according to some two thousand, according to others ten thousand, were executed in a most extraordinary and hideous manner. The captives were firmly bound hand and foot, and their living bodies actually built into a solid wall with mortar, like so many stones cemented together. In the history of the Knights Hospitalers we have met with an account of a living bridge, or rather causeway of human bodies, constructed in a manner not less horrible than that adopted in the building of Tamerlane's hideous ramparts—with the difference, however, that the immolation was, in the present instance, voluntary. During the siege of Acre by the Saracens and its defense by the Knights of St. John, shortly before their expulsion from Palestine, the besiegers found it necessary to have a huge moat filled up at a point where a breach had been effected, but the hurricane of missiles from the ramparts rendered this almost impossible. At this juncture, it is said, a body of Moslem fanatics, in obedience to their leader, filled up the yawning ditch by precipitating themselves into it by thousands—a host of *Curtii*—and over the quivering causeway of living flesh and bone the storming party rushed to the assault. But this anecdote is probably on a par with a well known story to the effect that the Crusaders, after storming

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Jerusalem, rode in blood up to the bridles of their horses!

Human blood has certainly been used in a variety of odd ways—for dyeing clothing by ferocious freebooters with a view of inspiring terror, for a beverage occasionally, and it is even said for baths. Draughts of human blood were often taken by the participants in ancient magic rites. The many stories told of Sans-culotte cannibalism during the great French Revolution include some curious instances of blood-drinking—as, for example, the tale of a young lady who saved her father's life by drinking a glassful of "the blood of the aristocrats." We need not dilate at all upon the story of the revenge of Queen Thomyris. That most monstrous of all human monsters, Gilles de Retz, was said to have occasionally indulged in baths of human blood. De Retz flourished in the fifteenth century, being executed in 1440. He was a rich and powerful nobleman, had fought under the Maid of Orleans, assisted at the coronation of Charles II, and been rewarded for his warlike services with a Marshal's baton. The frightful crimes which he committed are in great part attributed to his belief in witchcraft; but certain of his atrocities could not find even so miserable an excuse. They were first brought to light owing to the complaints of the peasantry living in the vicinity of his castle, near Nantes, who from time to time found their children kidnaped, and suspected that De Retz had been instrumental in the abduction. A search of the castle vaults resulted in the discovery of the calcined bones of not less than one hundred and forty children, whom he subsequently confessed having tortured to death with circumstances of barbarity, unnatural sensualism, and abominations too foul to be hinted at. In consideration of his high rank, the sentence of death at the stake was in his case commuted to

death by strangulation, and his body received honorable burial at the hands of "damsels of high decree." Like our modern criminals, De Retz died expressing firm belief of enjoying Paradise.

We must not forget to mention in our little record of desecrations of the human body, that the Turks, during the siege of Malta, frequently decapitated prisoners and fired the heads from cannon into the city; also, that La Valette, Grand Master of the Knights Hospitalers, returned the compliment by loading his guns with the heads of some Moslem captives.

It is scarcely necessary in this little article to refer to the superstitious use made of children's caul (which, by the way, are frequently advertised for sale in the columns of the *London Times*); or to the irreverent modern utilization of human hair and human teeth—to fashionable head-dresses and first-class dentistry. We may remark, however, that bow-strings were frequently made from human hair in ancient times; and Scandinavian mythology contains some curious fables regarding the finger-nails and toe-nails of dead men. The ancient Eddas taught that when comes Ragnarock, the awful Twilight of the Gods; when the monsters break loose; when the earth-encircling serpent leaves his home in the sea; when—

"Mountains together dash,  
Giants together rush,  
Men tread the path to Hell,  
And Heaven is rent in twain;"

—then from the north shall sail the ghastly ship Naglfar, steered by the giant Hrym, and manned by the monstrous Hrymthysar. The sea will be so rough that only a magic

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vessel can float upon it; and the ship Naglfar will be a magic vessel made wholly from the nails of dead men. As the sailing of Naglfar bodes much evil to the Æsir gods, it was long a religious custom with the Norsemen to keep their nails cut as short as possible, so that they might furnish little material to the building of the wizard ship, and thus delay its coming.

The most ludicrous desecration of the human body is perhaps afforded in the modern utilization of Egyptian mummies for firewood. It is said that the poor mummies burn well, being thoroughly dry, and impregnated by the embalmers with resinous substances. But the creature who dares burn mummies in his fireplace must be very skeptical in regard to a future state.

We have already spoken of the conversion of skeletons into furniture, but have not called attention to the eerie art of an Italian inventor, who but a few years since proposed to convert human flesh into table-tops, washstand slabs, etc., and actually exhibited specimens of his manufacture. The man appears to have discovered a process by which bodies could be so petrified that the stony flesh would take a beautiful polish; and he exhibited little tables made of petrified viscera so polished that the convolutions, and even the very texture of the intestines were visible. At least so the story goes. The inventor proposed to take the bodies of great men, petrify them, polish them, erect them on pedestals, and thus drive one class of sculpture out of the market. They say that the Government refused to patronize him and grant the privileges and patents which he desired; that he died of chagrin, and that his wonderful secret died with him. But all this may be a clever canard.

It is generally known that medical students have no re-

spect whatever for the sanctity of the grave and the sleep which is eternal; that they never hesitate to rob a tomb; that they pay about forty-five dollars for "stiffs" brought them by professional ghouls; that in their dissecting-rooms they frequently indulge in the pastime of pelting each other with fragments of corpses, and that most young sawbones have a grinning skull or a fantastic skeleton in their private study-rooms. But it is not perhaps generally known that the cleansing, bleaching, and articulating a skeleton for medical museums is quite a trade in itself, at which, in some cities, considerable money is made. After the bones have been thoroughly denuded of flesh by the dissecting-knife, they are thrown into a huge kettle and boiled for ten or twelve hours. This process removes considerable grease and fleshy matter, which the knife could not reach; but the bones are still in no way fit for articulation. They would begin to smell most horribly in a short time. Boiling can not remove the greases and oils which permeate the texture of the bone itself. Therefore, the boiled skeleton is deposited, joint by joint, in a large tub or barrel, sufficient water is poured in to cover it, and the whole is then well covered over. The bones are left soaking thus for a period varying from six months to a year. This process is termed "maceration," and generally suffices to remove almost every particle of grease from the skeleton. The period of maceration must greatly depend, however, on the age of the bones; those of young persons, especially women and children, requiring not more than six months' maceration, those of old people being often very greasy, and requiring much longer. At the end of six months or a year the bones are taken from the tubs. They are by that time blacker than coal, being covered with an oily and sooty deposit ex-

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tracted by the process of maceration. This is removed by scrubbing with a fine brush, and the bones are left in the sun to bleach. From a dingy yellow they gradually turn white, and are then ready for articulating, and putting together with wires.

## THE DEMI-MONDE OF THE ANTIQUE WORLD

"What's your name, curly-head?"

"Ain't got no name."

"Well, you don't deserve to have any. How old are you?"

"You can't get nothing out of me, nohow. 'Tain't no use trying."

But the arresting officer was able and willing to furnish the desired information, and the charge was "vagrancy." The girl was just old enough to be wicked, just ignorant enough to be stupid, and withal good-looking enough to excite compassion for her naughtiness and ignorance. They locked her up. The Captain recorded the charge with an amused smile at the culprit's obstinacy, while the reporter entered in his note-book something about the Police Superintendent's "determination to mitigate the social evil," and about the arrest of "a notorious cyprian," etc. He was a sensational reporter, and probably preferred the word "cyprian," by reason of its soft sibilance, so suggestive of sensuous sin. Yet there is something of antique loveliness about classic names and classic memories, though even suggestive of Titanic iniquity, and the reporter's application of the word seemed painfully inappropriate to us. Certainly the cities of Cyprus were sinful cities, according to our modern code of ethics; but their sins were splendid sins, sweetened, as Swinburne would say, with the fumes of sacrificial incense—glorified by hierophantic rites, within temples of snowy stone—gilded with such magnificence that the name

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of the place of their commission has become immortal—and boasting even in classic ages a fame already hoary in the days of Homer, who sang of the shrine of Aphrodite at Paphos. Now the first consideration provoked by the application or misapplication of the term “cyprian,” to the poor outcast of modern society, is that what we hold as the greatest of social evils to-day was cultivated rather than restrained by an older civilization, and actually entered largely into the rites of ancient religions. This consideration furnishes considerable food for some interesting meditations on the worship of Venus and the antiquity of those social vices which Christian legislation has only succeeded in half masking and half draping.

When Aphrodite, the snowy-limbed and sunny-haired, rose in immortal beauty from the whispering sea, the ancient writers state that she sped forthwith “on shining feet” to Cyprus the Beautiful, wherefore it came to pass that the island became in a certain sense consecrated to the goddess, and the worship of Venus Anadyomene centralized, so to speak, at Paphos. There were two cities of that name in the island, both of great antiquity, but the oldest mentioned by Homer was the great place of pilgrimage for the votaries of Aphrodite throughout the whole earth. Princes from the most eastern East and the most remote kingdoms of the ancient world came from afar to worship at her famous fanes, bearing presents of fine gold—

“Strange spice and flower, strange savor of crushed fruit,  
And perfume the swart kings tread under foot  
For pleasure when their minds wax amorous,  
Charred frankincense and grated sandal-root.”



Illustrious Phœnician priests, of lineage mythologically ancient, served at her altars; a million of worshipers annually thronged the highways leading to that giant temple whose ruins still remain, and thousands of female slaves took part in the gorgeous ceremonies performed there. The modern Cyprus is best known by its wines; the ancient by its vices.

Many of the mysteries of this ancient worship are unknown, and many are but guessed at; but many which are known through classic writings may not be more than hinted at in this connection; for instance, the ceremonial prostitution of young women within the temple inclosure, as enjoined by the old Hierophantic dispensation.

The goddess enjoyed similar homage at many other shrines, though perhaps on a less magnificent scale. At Corinth her worship was characterized by the most unbridled indulgence in sensualism; a thousand courtesans were maintained as *ieroduloi*, or "sacred slaves," at her chief temple in that city, and, according to Strabo, these women effected the moral and financial ruin of thousands of strangers who visited the city. It was an ancient custom in that sybaritic city to employ as many courtesans as could be hired to join in prayer to the goddess Aphrodite on great occasions, and to join in the ceremonies with songs and lascivious dances. When Xerxes sailed against the Greeks all the courtesans of Corinth assembled in the great temple of the goddess, and prayed for celestial aid against the Persians. It would seem, too, that the citizens of Corinth believed these prayers to have been most efficacious, for after the overthrow of the Persians, they had employed skillful artists at great expense to paint the portraits of

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those *hetairæ* who had joined in the sacred supplication, and those portraits were hung as votive offerings in the shrine of Aphrodite. Pious people made vows to the gods in those days, much as the mediæval Catholics did, to their favorite saints; and it was the custom in praying to Aphrodite that should the prayer be granted the favored one would bring to the temple a certain number of courtesans to join in the thanksgiving ceremony. Athenæus tells us that when Xenophon the Corinthian was about to depart for the scene of the Olympic games, he made a vow after this fashion to Venus, hoping by her aid to win a prize. And having won gloriously he kept his vow religiously, Pindar writing an ode for the occasion, whereof the following is a fragment:

“O! Queen of Cyprus isle,  
Come to this grove.  
Lo, Xenophon, succeeding in his aim,  
Brings you a band of willing maidens,  
Dancing on a hundred feet.”

Such “maidens” figured in most of the great ceremonies performed in the temples by the many named goddess; and many of these temples were, erected to Venus the Prostitute. Solon, the Athenian law-giver, seems to have had in common with many modern legislators the belief that prostitution should be licensed and regulated by law; and he established brothels, imposed a tax on the occupants, and with the money thus earned erected a temple to the Public Venus. At Abydos there was a temple of the same name, erected by the citizens of that town in commemoration of their deliverance from slavery through the agency of a courtesan. There was also such a temple at Ephesus,

and several in various parts of the Old World. When Pericles went with his army against Samos, a number of *hetairæ* followed the troops; and these women became so rich during the siege, that at its close they had a statue of Venus carved and erected without the walls, which statue was known as the Venus of Samos, or Venus Among the Reeds. When certain Thessalian women, jealous of the beauty of the younger Lais, stoned that famous *hetaira* to death in the temple of Aphrodite, the goddess afflicted the city with a terrible pestilence, which did not cease until a temple had been erected to her by way of atonement for the two-fold sin of murdering a priestess of Venus within the temple inclosure. For the public women of that day were often honored with that title, and with many privileges. Their mode of life was sometimes regarded as rather pious than otherwise. The profligacy of that age was not punished by the terrible results consequent upon modern sensualism. Society did not desire to persecute the courtesan; and, indeed, the morals of the age were so shocking in many respects that the vices of these women seem virtues by comparison with other fashionable crimes then in vogue. Ignorance, too, was considered a great safeguard of female virtue in those days; so that the courtesans alone enjoyed equal advantages of intellectual training with the men of philosophical Greece, and their society was coveted by the most learned, because of their charms of conversation. They were often educated women, highly skilled in the arts of the age, versed in philosophical literature and learning, accomplished in music and dancing, and mistresses of all those physical and mental attractions which fascinate and conquer men. Aspasia was the instructor not only of Pericles, but of Socrates, according to some writers; the arcadian

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Lasthenia was the disciple of Plato; and the naughty Leontion a disciple of Epicurus. And who has not heard of Phryne?

Phryne was perhaps as lovely a woman as any of those whose beauty poets have sung of, painters limned on canvas, or sculptors crystallized in immortal marble. She is represented by the ancient writers as a beauty with golden or auburn hair of extraordinary length, such hair as travelers inform us is occasionally met with even among the dark races of Southern Europe, and of such perfect physical beauty that she seemed a living realization of Venus herself. Unlike other *hetairæ*, however, Phryne seldom unveiled her beauty, and never donned the famous *coæ vestæ*, the gauzy, transparent robes so fashionable with the female flute-players and dancing girls of the period. But once, during the celebration of the Mysteries at Eleusis, on the special occasion of the Posidonia, or festival of Neptune, Phryne unrobed in presence of all the assembled Greeks, and descended, with loose-flowing hair to bathe in the waves—an occurrence which forms the subject of one of Turner's most famous paintings. Apelles, the celebrated Greek painter, was present at Eleusis on that occasion, and the spectacle of Phryne returning from the bath like Venus Anadyomene, wringing the briny moisture from her hair, and smiling at the rapturous applause of the vast crowds, inspired him with the idea of his greatest painting—Aphrodite Rising from the Sea. The handsome courtesan willingly became the painter's model; and his representation of her as Venus Anadyomene became so famous that people traveled hundreds of miles to behold it. In later days it was transferred to Rome, where it was preserved until the wear of time destroyed it. Then it will be remem-

bered that Praxiteles, the sculptor, molded his wonderful statue of the Cnidian Venus from the lithe limbs of Phryne herself, and she also was the model for a draped Venus of extraordinary beauty by the same artist. The citizens of Cos wanted a statue of Venus about that time; and Praxiteles offered them the choice of either work at the same price. According to Pliny, the good folks of Cos were over-afflicted with modesty, and accordingly chose the draped statue, while the other and more famous was purchased by the people of Cnidos. But a modern commentator observed that, inasmuch as the people of Cos were famous for the manufacture of those transparent dresses affected by the courtesans of that day, it is scarcely probable that they were over-afflicted with modesty, and that the statue chosen by them was not, in the proper sense, a draped statue, but simply the statue of Phryne clad in a transparent garment, which permitted the whole form to be seen. This is an effect in the production of which several modern sculptors have won renown. The statue of the Cnidian Venus was considered the greatest of the labors of Praxiteles, and strange stories are told of the wonders it effected within the little open temple where it was kept.

The Cnidian folks set great store on it, and when King Nicodemus afterward offered to pay off their public debt in exchange for the statue, they unhesitatingly refused to part with it. Praxiteles made Phryne a present of a statue of Cupid after this, on the pedestal of which was inscribed the lines—

“Praxiteles has devoted earnest care  
 To representing all the love he felt,  
 Drawing his model from his inmost heart.

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“I gave myself to Phryne for her wages,  
And now I no more charms or darts employ,  
Save those of earnest glances of my love.”

The Cnidian Venus represented the goddess coming from the bath, holding a piece of drapery in one hand, and having a vase lying at her feet; the form of the figure was said to express by its loveliness the love of the artist, and the smiling gaiety of the face to promise the sculptor's reward. It was wholly destroyed by a great fire at Constantinople, during the reign of the Emperor Justinian; and it is very doubtful whether the Cnidian Venus of the Vatican is a real copy. But Cleomones is said to have copied his Venus—known to-day as the Medicean—from the grand work of Praxiteles; and if this be true, we have at least a shadow left of the famous courtesan's beauty. The form of that statue is acknowledged perfection itself; the dainty head and radiant face lack vitality alone.

When Phryne got her Cupid, she brought it to Thespiæ, her native place, and consecrated it in the temple there. The Thespians were proud of her, it would seem, for they employed Praxiteles to model a statue of Phryne in pure gold, for a votive offering in the temple of Apollo at Delphi. This statue was a creation of wondrous beauty; it bore on the pedestal the inscription: “Phryne of Thespiæ, daughter of Epictes,” and it was placed between the statue of King Archidamus, of Lacedæmon, and Philip, the son of Amyntas, of Macedon. Years afterward, when the cynic Crates saw it there, he styled it “a votive offering of Greek profligacy,” and there are many to-day who will, perhaps, quite agree with old Crates.

Like those modern Anonymas and Mabel Grays whose

lives furnished materials for Boucicault's much-abused *Formosa*, for Charles Reade's *Terrible Temptation*, and for Ouida's *Puck*, Phryne was of humble origin. It is said she first made a living by gathering capers. Who first introduced her to that fashionably vicious society over which she subsequently reigned queen, we have no positive record; although several non-extant authors, quoted by Athenæas, are said to have written her life, together with a general history of famous courtesans. The lives of courtesans in those days were often remarkable enough to deserve such attention; and there were many old Greek books written about the witty sayings and doings of accomplished *hetairæ*, such as Gnathera, Lais, Lamia, Timandra, Satyra, Myrrhina, and others. Phryne appears to have been rather beautiful than witty; but her beauty was so transcendent that they say all who saw her fell in love with her. When she was accused of impiety before the Judges of the Areopagus by Enthias, Hyperides, the famous and profligate lawyer, became enamored of her, and pleaded her cause with extraordinary eloquence. There can be little doubt that Phryne was guilty—like our modern Anonymas, she was probably skeptical about religious matters. But when Hyperides, by a sudden movement, withdrew the robe of Phryne, displaying the fair bosom that Praxiteles had modeled in Parian stone, and with tears streaming down his cheeks, demanded of the Judges whether they could be heartless enough to condemn to death so fair "a priestess and prophetess of Venus," the sternness of justice melted into compassion, and Phryne was acquitted. It seems, however, that the Judges felt some pangs of conscience about the matter; for immediately after the trial they made a law to the effect that "hereafter no orator should en-

deavor to excite pity on behalf of any one; and that no man or woman when impeached should have their cases decided on while present." Poor old Judges!—they felt that justice had been blindfolded and conquered in their sacred persons by unfair means. The "prophetess and priestess of Venus" lived long after to enjoy her prodigious wealth.

We have some idea of how rich she had become from the fact that after the destruction of Thebes by Alexander, Phryne offered to rebuild the city walls out of her own pocket on the condition that her generosity should be commemorated by the inscription: "Alexander destroyed the wall, but Phryne, the courtesan, restored it." But the Thebans do not seem to have accepted the offer; feeling ashamed to thus honor a woman of such calling. And Phryne, like many fair women before her, finally died and passed beyond the dust of tombs, to the Place of Shadows—about two thousand years ago.

There were other fair and frail beauties of that age also immortalized by chisel and pen. Leæna, or the Lioness, a brave, faithful woman of Athens, became a heroine in spite of her profession. During the tyranny of Hippias in Athens, the famous conspiracy of Harmodius and Aristogiton took place; the tyrant Hipparchus was happily slain, but the conspirators were captured, tortured and executed. Leæna was known to be the mistress of one of the conspirators, and was immediately arrested and put to the torture. She died under it without opening her lips; and five years after, when the Athenians were freed from the tyranny of Hippias, and the heroism of Harmodius and his friend was being celebrated in those drinking songs which Athenæus has handed down to us, the men of Athens did not forget Leæna. It was resolved to erect a statue in her honor;



but in such a way that it should not appear that Athens had erected a statue to a courtesan. So they ordered a famous sculptor to mold and carve a handsome, lithe-limbed lioness in bronze, without a tongue; and thus the heroism of the girl was long commemorated by the brazen statue of a tongueless lioness. The Athenians do not seem to have been as openly profligate as the men of Corinth; and they did not honor courtesans so fervently. The public women of the former place were obliged to pay yearly tax; and any woman of good family who adopted the calling of a *hetaira*—as did Lais, daughter of Cleanor—was publicly degraded.

This Lais is otherwise called the elder Lais, to distinguish her from Lais of Hyccarra, the daughter of Timandra. Lais seems to have been a good little maiden until Apelles, the painter, made her acquaintance, and introduced her to the world of wickedness wherein she afterwards became celebrated as a rival of Phryne. Lais was chiefly remarkable for the beauty of her figure; but, unlike Phryne, she made no distinction as to whom she admitted to her favors. She was probably a Corinthian by birth; and so famous were her profligacies in that profligate city that they gave rise to the proverb, "Where Lais is, there is Corinth." She was at one period of her life immensely wealthy; but finally squandered her means in drinking and other follies, and is averred by some to have died in miserable poverty and hideous old age. But this is hardly likely; for was there not a celebrated monument afterwards erected to her memory at Corinth, bearing the bronze statue of a lioness tearing a ram? There were famous statues, too, in Egypt, of celebrated courtesans, represented as Venus the Prostitute.

Everybody has heard of Thais, in Dryden's celebrated

ode, how she sat beside King Alexander at Persepolis, how she occasioned the destruction of the palaces of the Persian monarchs, how, like another Helen, she fired another Troy. But we are glad to state on good authority that modern classicists regard this story as the malicious invention of an unreliable historian; and this is the more likely because Thais afterward married Ptolemy, of Egypt, and became quite virtuous and respectable, so to speak.

Lamia, the love of Demetrius Poliorcetes, was perhaps the shrewdest, wittiest, and most spendthrift *hetaira* of her day; outrivaling her prince-lover in the splendor of his banquets and the costliness of his entertainments. But she atoned for this, perhaps, by building a magnificent portico for the citizens of Sicyon. She was far beyond her prime when she fascinated Demetrius; but no other woman ever obtained so great an influence over him. It is recorded that the most outrageous injustice ever perpetrated upon the Athenians by Demetrius, was, when he levied a tax of 150 talents—about \$200,000—on the whole city, and presented the whole amount, after it had been collected only with the greatest difficulty and suffering, to Lamia for soap money. The Athenians are said to have revenged themselves by declaring that Lamia must certainly be the filthiest of all women, inasmuch as she needed 150 talents' worth of soap. But Thais and Lamia were not the only courtesans of that age who sat at the table of the King. Hieronymus, Tyrant of Syracuse, fell in love with a *hetaira* named Pinto, and married her, and made her Queen of Syracuse. Gyges, the Lydian, loved a public woman, and is said to have raised a memorial mound upon her grave so lofty that it was visible from all parts of his domain, and it was known as the Tomb of the Lydian Courtesan.

Such narratives illustrate to some degree the position occupied in classic society by women of this calling. Rome produced no such women; but in modern times we find occasionally their parallels in characters like Ninon de L'Enclos, and certain young ladies of the seventeenth century, beautiful, witty and wicked, whom Paris still remembers. But as we have already hinted, the respect paid to courtesans as priestesses of Venus was not by any means universal throughout the old Hellenic world; and even in Hellas proper, Corinth, the Paris of Greek fashion and luxury, was alone as equally famous for its courtesans and its arts. Under the legislation of Pausanius, Sparta was too virtuous a city for such things; and even in Athens there was always much conservatism displayed in the honors paid to *hetairæ*. Themistocles drove through the city once in a chariot filled with courtesans, just as a fast young man to-day might do in a drunken frolic; but his conduct in this regard appears to have been considered highly disgraceful by the Athenians, and an ancient writer satirically excuses it on the ground that Themistocles was himself the son of a courtesan. Athenæus depicts old withered *hetairæ*, once famous beauties, jeered at and insulted in the market-place of the city, by the roughs and loafers of that age. In Athens the *hetairæ* had to pay an annual tax; but nevertheless they were not compelled to wear a saffron-colored robe, as at Rome; they had some privileges; and all over the Hellenic world the *demi-monde* had its particular holidays, when the worship of Aphrodite was celebrated on a grand scale by her "priestesses." When we except the peculiar glorification of their life by the sensuous religion of the day, however, we find that the common prostitute of Athens or Corinth was not superior in most respects to the

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modern *nymphes du pavé*. They were too often thieves, even in the pursuit of their avocation as prophetesses of Venus, in the sacred temples. They played "panel-games" quite successfully, and an old writer, Xenarchus, tells us that they walked the streets at night, addressing the passers-by with, "How are you, baby?" "Good evening, old papa!" just as the young street-walker brought into the station-house in our presence had been doing. A Nation whose faith has been truly termed the Religion of Beauty, who cultivated physical perfection and erotic art in the highest degree, and who prided themselves above all upon their intellectual superiority, could not but produce *hetairæ* famous for wisdom and beauty; but the lower classes of their vicious women seem to have been quite as abandoned and contemptible as our modern Moll Flanderses, if we except their accomplishments as dancers and flute players. On the whole, however, the sins of that age appear to have been a little more splendid, better gilt, more thickly plated, than those of ours, and the London and Paris of the nineteenth century does not produce Anonymas intellectually comparable with the Greek *hetairæ*.

Well, the old world grew wiser and wickeder, until at last the tare growths of its wickedness arose and strangled the wheat of its wisdom, and sucked drier than desert sand the soil they grew on, and, withering, left a wilderness behind. Hellas passed away, with its glories, its religion of beauty, and its beautiful sinners. Rome gave birth to the Faustinas and Elagabali in her Imperial age, and, at last, died; from the far East, and the birth-place of Nations, and creeds, came a New Faith to sit upon the ruins of the old, and the worship of Venus expired in ashes upon a thousand pale altars. The new priesthood razed her fairest fanes,

and taught their flocks that the ancient Venus was but a fiend in woman's garb. Venus it was that enticed away the Knight's Tannhauser, and that persecuted with hideous nightmare the unfortunate youth of mediæval legend, who carelessly left his wedding ring upon the finger of one of her statues.

. . . The Captain suddenly rushed from his office with an oath; the sensational reporter suddenly seized his note book; there was a great excitement among the prisoners in the cell room. "Curly-head" had attempted suicide by hanging herself with her shawl, and but for the vigilance of the turnkey might have been saved much further affliction in this life. The reporter, becoming compassionate, mentally substituted the words "unfortunate cyprian" for "notorious cyprian!" Poor cyprian; two thousand years ago you might have been famous—to-day a triple curse, not of Cyprus, but of society, religion and nature. A few more Menad orgies, a few more years of shame, a few more visits to the workhouse, and then the final sleep, from whence even the echo of a patrolman's club upon the chamber door cannot rouse you; and then—the dissecting-room.

# THE POISONERS

## CURIOSITIES OF CRIMINAL HISTORY

Some time ago a young colored man, the janitor of a large business house not many squares from the Commercial office, informed us, in the course of a chance conversation, that Voodooism was certainly prevalent in Cincinnati; that its high-priests were mostly old negro herb doctors and fortune-tellers, who masked their real calling under the garb of physicians; that the most ignorant portion of the colored community were desperately afraid of these Voodooos (or *hoodoos*, as he pronounced the name), and that those once initiated into the mysteries of Voodooism could not be induced by any means to reveal its secrets—such revelation being punished by affliction too frightful for detailed description. It was the custom, he further informed us, for despairing lovers of both sexes to visit these Voodoo doctors for the purpose of obtaining wizard aid in the accomplishment of their desires, and of purchasing love potions or charms. Not only the young man unsuccessful in wooing, or the young woman desirous of obtaining some good-looking youth for a husband, but likewise those who sought to be revenged on enemies or to discomfit rivals, visited these reputed sorcerers; and it was the custom to take with them a lock of hair or fragment of clothing belonging to the individual whom they desired to have “charmed.” This charming was a thing of all things to be dreaded, our informant observed; and he knew whereof he spake, inasmuch as a certain girl who had fallen in love

with him three or four years previously had paid a Voodoo doctor to charm him. "And since that time," he said, "I ain't no more the same man as I used to be. You can see I walk kind of lame now; and my left leg has shrunk up considerably."

We observed that it was contrary to ordinary human nature, at least, to inflict pain or injury upon any object of affection; and, further, hinted that the young woman referred to must have had some wrong to avenge.

"Oh, no," he replied; "you don't understand the ways of these hoodoos. Supposing you fall in love with a girl and can't get her, and that you go to one of these hoodoos, he will do something awful to her with charms; and she will get terribly sick, and no doctor can cure her. But when she becomes willing to marry you, then the hoodoo will take the charm away and cure her up."

"But supposing that she would rather die than marry the man who got her charmed?"

"Well, in that case, she would die, of course, unless she could get some other hoodoo doctor to take the charm away by a counter charm; but even then she would never be the same woman she was before. That's the way it was with me. I wouldn't have married the girl that got me charmed for anything; and I got the spell taken off; but I ain't right well yet, and never will be. I don't know how I was charmed, but I know who the woman was; and I know the day after she went to that wizard man I was struck all of a heap with pain, and had to be carried to my room. Then my whole leg swelled up and broke out in big ulcers, and for days I could do nothing but lie on my back and howl. At last I felt convinced I was charmed, and I sent for one of these hoodoos, and he agreed to cure me for twenty-five

dollars. He gave me a little glass bottle filled with some stuff that looked like water, and told me to drink a little of it three or four times a day. So I took it, and in three days more I could hobble around pretty well; but my leg kind of withered, as you see it. Of course I'd have died if I hadn't got the spell broken. Oh! I tell you I am afraid of those hoodoos—indeed I am!”

We found the young man's story sufficiently interesting to at least excite curiosity; and succeeded in obtaining from him a succinct account of his malady and its cure. He described the results of the ghastly charm wherewith he had been afflicted as an ulceration of the left leg, accompanied with frightful swelling, and all the external symptoms of acute mortification; and the limb was certainly scarred as though it had been severely burned. The Voodoo doctor who cured him gave him only internal medicine; but he also gave him certain queer articles inclosed in a small phial, and ordered him to bury them before the door of the house, for the purpose of “breaking the charm.” He did not know the nature of these articles; did not know whether his disease might not have been the result of secret poisoning; and did not know whether Voodoo doctors were skilled in the concoction and administration of secret poison. But he did know that he had never been afflicted with any other disease; that several regular physicians whom he consulted were unable either to mitigate his pain or to account for its source, and that he “would not offend one of those hoodoos for anything in God's world.” There were several of them residing in Cincinnati, he added, but not permanently—they traveled to other cities from time to time, and made a good deal of money. The one who treated him he described as a very black man, “with red eyes,” a white beard, and a



countenance weird and terrible to look upon. He could, of course, introduce us to one of the Voodoo doctors some day or other, if we should feel so inclined; but he would not, on any consideration, introduce us in a reportorial capacity; and he further warned us that the experience would be fraught with extreme danger to ourselves.

We might have dismissed the whole story as an amusing instance of superstition or an ingenious fabrication but for the reason that the story-teller's reputation for veracity was excellent, and also because it was by no means the first time that we had heard similar Voodoo stories from reliable sources. In every such case the results of the "spell" spoken of suggested the use of some potent corrosive poison, secretly administered; and it seemed quite possible that the young janitor's affliction might have been a case of local poisoning, curable only by some one skilled in Voodoo toxicology. Some years ago there was considerable excitement among the colored gossips of Covington, by reason of the supposed poisoning of an old woman known as "Aunt Julia," by a lame negro, who enjoys the reputation of a Voodoo sorcerer. The latter individual is much dreaded by his acquaintances; and his alleged victim, who is certainly afflicted with some strange and seemingly incurable disease, is regarded as an awful example of his powers. The story goes that the old woman had a pain in her knee on one occasion; that the wizard, who is best known by the nickname of "Old Hogfoot," brought her a transparent lotion to bathe the aching member with; and that immediately after using it, violent inflammation and swelling followed, with subsequent results similar to those described to us by the young janitor. Another colored man told us upon one occasion that a Voodoo sorcerer had poi-

soned him, together with his father, mother, brothers and sisters, all at one fell swoop, so to speak, in revenge for some trivial affront; that several members of the family had died, and that those who recovered from the first shock of the poison were permanently crippled for the rest of their lives. It is rather odd that in every case of this kind which has been reported to us, the victims always appeared to have been lamed, and the poison to have been administered in such fashion as to affect the right or left knee.

There is no room to doubt that, as a recent writer on the subject of arrow-poison observes, the influence exercised by these reputed wizards over their negro brethren is almost wholly due to the knowledge of certain subtle poisons, apparently of a violently septic nature; and the character of Voodoo influence is often so well recognized by persons employing large bodies of negro laborers, that they feel assured of obtaining good behavior and first-class work from their employees if they but secure a proper understanding with the conjurers, one or more of whom are usually to be found among any community of colored workmen. It is scarcely necessary to observe that Voodooism comes from Africa, and that the native African conjurers are skillful poisoners. The poison ordeals and executions by poison, as customary among certain aboriginal tribes of Central and South Africa, are too well known through the writings of modern travelers to need more than passing mention. It is worth while mentioning, however, that the effects of the arrow poison used by certain tribes, according to Sir Samuel Baker, resemble those attributed to the secret poison concocted by Voodoo conjurers in the United States. The action of the poison appears to be rather local than general; the wound putrefies and the flesh sloughs away,

leaving the bones bare. By some this poison is supposed to be derived from those venomous creeping plants that luxuriate in tropical climates; by others it is thought that putrefied animal matter enters into its composition. It is the popular belief among colored people in this city that Voodoo doctors obtain their drugs from herbs. The knowledge of these secret poisons is transmitted from father to son, and such knowledge is a very difficult though desirable thing to kill, as history proves.

This subject naturally leads one to the consideration of one of the most curious and yet least known chapters in history—that of Secret Poison. This chapter extends from the age of mythology to the present time, and has within comparatively late years afforded no little interest to the seeker after literary curiosities. Modern writers on medical jurisprudence, toxicology, etc., have, however, given little or no special attention to the history of secret poisons, and there are few works in the English tongue upon the subject. But the Germans appear to have studied it radically, and a variety of curious books upon the poisons and poisoners of antiquity exist in the German language. The sources of modern knowledge of such matters are necessarily very much scattered, and consist chiefly in little more than brief allusions to secret assassinations, which one can only pick up here and there among the works of numerous historians. For the old Governments generally exerted themselves to the utmost to suppress all knowledge of secret poison, and the old historians generally felt it their duty to say as little on the subject as possible. What we have been able to learn from these latter, nevertheless, is of great and peculiar interest.

The early classic myths, regarding the maleficent witch-

eries of Circe and Medusa, the poisoned arrows of Ulysses and Hercules, the fatal garment which slew the demi-god and the deadly robe presented to the bride of Jason, would seem to indicate that the use of poison for purposes of warfare or secret assassination, was known in the prehistoric age. But perhaps the earliest instance of poisoning as a fine art, carried on by a secret society, is that given in the eighth book of Livy. About 329 B. C., during the consulate of Marcus Claudius Marcellus and C. Valerius Flaccus, Rome was afflicted by an extraordinary mortality, which threw the city into a panic, and the character of which seemed to indicate the existence of a society of secret assassins, who dealt in poisons which left no trace of their presence. The Government long sought in vain to arrive at the source of the evil, however, until, one day, a trembling maid-servant presented herself before the Curule Ædile, Quintius Fabius Maximus, and promised to reveal the terrible secret on condition of pardon for her own participation in the crimes of her mistress. The girl's confession resulted in the discovery of a secret organization of poisoners, including several hundred married women, presided over by certain noble ladies named Cornelia and Sergia. One hundred and seventy Roman matrons were brought to justice and punished, whereupon there followed a wonderful diminution in the daily number of deaths in Rome. It is a very odd fact that almost all the celebrated secret societies of this character spoken of in ancient or modern history were composed chiefly of married women, and that nearly all the famous poisoners of antiquity were of the fair sex. Livy does not tell us what ingredients entered into the composition of the drugs used by Cornelia and Sergia, and it is elsewhere recorded that the Government very prop-

erly kept such secrets as were extorted from the accused by torture or otherwise.

Theophratus speaks of one Thrasyas of Arcadia as the inventor of a secret poison which could be so prepared as to produce death within any period from two seconds to two years after its administration. Alexis, a pupil of Thrasyas, is said to have cultivated the art of secret poisoning to a far higher degree than his preceptor; and it has been thought by some that the baneful arts of the matrons Cornelia and Sergia were learned directly or indirectly from the poisoner Alexis. This species of poison, or one very similar to it, is also spoken of by the orator Quintilian and the historian Plutarch, who tells us that Philip of Macedon administered to Aratus of Sicyon a slow poison, which gradually undermined the intellect and destroyed the lungs. Artillius Regulus, the unfortunate Roman General taken captive by the Carthaginians, is said by some historians to have been given a poison of this kind previous to his being sent to Rome on parole, for the purpose of negotiating an exchange of prisoners. Regulus advised the Senate to entertain no such proposals, at the same time informing them that he could not be of service to them much longer even should he remain with them, so that it were useless to regret his return to Carthage in redemption of his word. This narrative is rather calculated to dampen one's enthusiasm in regard to the heroism of Regulus.

The poisoning of Drusus by Sejanus, of Claudius by Agrippina, of Britannicus by Nero, of Titus by Domitian, of Commodus by Marcia, are sufficient to prove that the art of secret assassination flourished quite as well in the age of the Cæsars as it had done in the time of the republic. The celebrated Locusta figures in these shocking annals as the

instrument both of Agrippina and her son Nero, in the murders of Claudius and Britannicus, both of whom were poisoned by a dish of drugged mushrooms. It appears that at the time when the death of Britannicus was fully agreed upon, Locusta was under sentence of death for various crimes, but had not been executed, probably owing to a feeling on the part of the Emperor that she might prove useful. When she first prepared the decoction for Britannicus, according to Nero's orders, the Emperor, in order to test its strength, administered some of it to a kid; but the animal expired only after five hours of agony. Nero thereupon chastised Locusta with his own hands, and forced her to prepare a stronger poison under his own supervision. Locusta averred that she had purposely made the poison weak lest the suddenness of its effects should create too much suspicion, but Nero evidently cared little for results. When the second potion was prepared he gave some of it to a pig, which dropped dead instantaneously, as though struck by lightning; and at the next meal spread in the palace a dish of mushrooms envenomed with Locusta's preparation was placed before Britannicus. He had no sooner tasted it than he fell back in his chair, as though afflicted by a paralytic stroke, and was carried from the room dead. Nero is said to have rewarded Locusta with a full pardon, great estates in land, and much riches; and, moreover, to have given her pupils to instruct in the art of poisoning.

It is difficult, of course, to guess at the true nature of the abominable preparations used by such poisoners as Locusta; but it is certainly amusing to peruse some of the old stories upon this subject. We are told that one frightful description of poison was prepared from the foam which flowed from the mouth of a human being tortured to death! Cer-

tainly there seems to have been a popular belief among the Romans that the witches of the time kidnaped children and tortured them to death, in order to procure material for their potions and philters. Horace describes Canidia (Ode V) crowning her disheveled locks with writhing vipers, and ordering her attendants to procure wild fig trees, torn from the graves of the dead, cypress branches, and eggs besmeared with the slime of toads, owls' feathers, bones snatched from the mouths of hungry bitches, and the poison-plants of Iolchos and Spain, as they were about to torture a boy to death. The boy's vain pleas for mercy, and subsequent threats; the cruel looks of the witches, and their method of inflicting death, are graphically described. The boy is to be buried in the earth up to his neck, rich food and drink being placed at a little distance from him, and is then to be left to starve to death, with his eyes vainly fixed upon the unattainable condiments before him. Special magical virtues were attributed to the dried-up liver and parched marrow of a human being so put to death—just as the Yamas Indians of South America to-day regard the marrow of their departed kindred as imbued with wonderful qualities of nutrition, wherefore they always split open the bones of the dead and devour the contents. The similarity of the legends of all civilized countries in regard to the practices of the ancient magicians as involving torture certainly lead one to believe that such abominations have really been perpetrated. Whether the "foam of a human being tortured to death" would prove a powerful poison, we will not attempt to determine; but it is worth while mentioning that several writers speak of the foam of a pig tortured to death as used in this manner by the Roman poisoners. The pig was hung by the legs, and tortured for several

days by fire and the knife; the foam that fell from its jaws was all the while carefully collected, and mingled with the venom of a certain viper that was found in the Campagna. Those who tasted of this poison were said to die in frightful agony, uttering squeaks and strange cries similar to those of the tortured pig. The flesh of the sea-hair (*aplysia dephilaus*) is also said to have been used as a poison.

Italy, both in ancient and modern history, appears to have always been pre-eminent in crime of this description. The Papal Court in the middle ages was often disgraced by murders of this character; and Alexander VI is said to have poisoned half the rich nobility of Rome in order to secure their wealth for Cæsar Borgia, and also to destroy all possibility of opposition to his own schemes of aggrandizement. But he himself at last perished by poison in 1503. The story is that the Pope greatly desired to get rid of the Lord-Cardinal Arian de Cometo, and to possess himself of the riches of said Cardinal. He thereafter determined to poison him, and, when the plot matured, the Cardinal one evening "received gracious intimation that the Pope and his brother, the Duke de Valentinos, would come to sup with him, and bring the supper with him. The Cardinal was shrewd enough to divine the purpose of his visitors, and he immediately sent for the Pope's chief cook, whom he succeeded in gaining by a prodigious bribe and liberal promises. The cook informed the Cardinal that certain boxes of sweetmeats had been poisoned for his benefit; and when the august visitors arrived Arian insisted upon waiting on the Pope himself. At the close of the repast the sweetmeats were handed round by the Cardinal, who placed the poisoned condiments before his self-invited guests, and the harmless dessert before his own place at the table, taking



the precaution, however, to swallow an emetic the better to conceal the real facts of the case. The Pope died within a few hours of eating, the Cardinal feigned sickness successfully; Cæsar Borgia became "slightly indisposed," but soon recovered. But Cæsar was a giant in stature and strength, and the prodigious vigor of his constitution alone saved him from a horrible death. Like Commodus, he was distinguished for his athletic feats; and like Commodus, his great excesses seem in no way to have impaired his great strength. Of course the poison had not been intended for him, nevertheless; for the mediæval poisoners were always careful to concoct their potions with due regard to the physical condition of their intended victims. Volumes might be written upon the poisoners of that time, the number of Princes and nobles assassinated by them—not to mention the common people, and the extraordinary perfection to which they carried their art. No one was safe, and no precautions availed. A bouquet presented to a Princess bore a volatile death in the perfume of its blossoms; a pair of gloves purchased at a fashionable dealer's might or might not be so virulently poisoned that death would ensue within a few hours after first putting them on; the leaves of books were poisoned, so that one who wetted his finger, after the fashion of the Caliph in the Arabian Tale, in order the easier to turn over a leaf, thus conveyed death to his lips; drinking vessels, apparently clean, were poisoned by the cloth that wiped them; weapons and articles of clothing were frequently made vehicles of death to the possessor; and it is even said that poisons were used of which the mere presence in a chamber, or the sprinkling at a threshold caused death. Poisoned hollow rings with a secret spring and a tiny fang, were worn on the finger of the as-

sassin, who had only to shake the hand of an acquaintance in friendly guise to slay him. The tiny wounds inflicted by such rings are said to have been almost imperceptible, and never felt by the victim. The Venetian assassins, we are told, sometimes used glass daggers, of which the hollow blades were filled with poison, and these blades were usually broken off in the wound.

The most celebrated of all the so-called Italian poisoners was beyond question the Sicilian, Tofana, inventor of the famous decoction, *aqua Tofana*. This woman practised her art at first in Palermo, but obtained her fame in Naples, where it is gravely asserted that in one year more people were killed by *aqua Tofana* than had been carried off by the plague, when it had visited the city during the previous year. The *aqua Tofana* is described as a liquid clear as crystal, tasteless and scentless, yet so fatal that a few drops would suffice to produce instant death. Nevertheless, it could be so tempered as to produce death within any time desired, so that victims might linger even for years. Like other and more ancient poisons referred to by writers on toxicology, it produced effects similar to consumption, when administered as a slow poison. A stream of water or oily liquid, to which extraordinary and miraculous virtues were attributed, was said to trickle from the tomb of St. Nicholas, of Bari, in those days, which liquid was bottled up, just as the "water of Our Lady of Lourdes" is to-day by fervent Catholics and eagerly purchased by the faithful. Tofana put up her poison in a precisely similar manner, the phials being labeled, "Manna of St. Nicholas of Bari," and bearing a picture of the Saint pasted outside. She sold these phials principally to young married women who wanted to get rid of their husbands, and of such there

seems to have been a great multitude; and the poison was also sent to nearly all the cities of Italy; its label, etc., distinguishing its true nature. The government long and vainly endeavored to seize the person of Tofana, who fled from convent to convent when hotly pursued, always emerging from her lair in disguises so ingenious as to defy detection. Convents were considered sacred asylums in those days; and when the Archbishop of Naples, Cardinal Pignatelli, having threatened to effectually excommunicate the whole city, if Tofana was not delivered up, finally ordered her to be taken by force from the convent to which she had been tracked, the people were on the point of rising in riot. The excitement was, however, speedily quelled by spreading a report to the effect that Tofana had inaugurated a conspiracy to poison all the wells, all the corn in the granaries and all the spring fruits. Tofana was strangled in prison according to the best authorities, the proceedings of her trial kept secret, and in the hope of concealing the real nature of her poison, the Pope established a law forbidding the manufacture or sale of *aqua fortis*. But this did not prevent people from finding out that *aqua Tofana* and *aqua fortis* were very different things, and the secret of the poison did not unfortunately die with the inventor. It is said to have been known in Italy as late as 1780. There have been many dissertations upon the nature of *aqua Tofana*; but its real composition is probably unknown, and many of the strange stories about its effects must be held as fables. Emtzel regarded it as having been made of sugar-of-lead, mingled with some more volatile poison of a corrosive character. Gaghani held it to have been an irritant, but not necessarily a deadly poison, mainly formed of cantharides and opium. He thought that the remedies

given for its cure were the chief cause of death. But this theory will not harmonize with the authentic description of the *aqua* as being odorless and limpid as rockwater. Halle said it was made from the foam of a human being tortured to death. Garelli says it was nothing more than crystallized arsenic mingled with the juice of the *antirrhinum cymbelaria*, a harmless plant. Lemon juice, taken in large doses, is said to have proven an effective antidote.

Now, in 1659, shortly before the punishment of Tofana according to some, according to others after that event, it was discovered that a secret society of young married women, organized for purposes of assassination, existed in Rome, presided over by a woman named Hieronyma Spara. The *aqua Tofana* was then in use, and, according to one writer, so widely in use that almost every noble lady had a phial of the poison in her dressing-case. Torture, death, public disgrace, public whipping and banishment were successfully resorted to for the purpose of breaking up the society. It was chiefly composed, we are told, of young married women who wished to get rid of their husbands, and to help others to do the same. Many ladies of rank belonged to it; and it boasted of more than six hundred victims.

The celebrated French poisoners of the seventeenth century are said to have been instructed by Italians in the art. Two of these criminals, known as Exili and Destinelli, having spent all their means in vain seeking after the Philosopher's Stone, established themselves in Paris and endeavored to recruit their fortunes by the preparation and sale of poisons which left no trace. As a natural consequence, to quote the words of a popular historian, "Paris was inundated with murder; no precaution sufficed for safety; death

lurked in every object of daily use. A glove, a perfume, a glass of water, a missal, each did the work of the conspirators. Friends shrunk from receiving the gifts of friends; fathers looked with suspicion upon the hospitality of their children, and sons forbore to grasp the hands of their fathers; the young beauty shuddered at the cosmetics upon her toilet, and the grave matron at the relics upon her rosary; the soldier could no longer handle his weapon without suspicion, and magistrates bent in dread over their parchments." Exili and Destinelli were confined in the Bastile, but they communicated their abominable secrets to others, even during their incarceration; and the evil which they did lived hundreds of years after them. It chanced that an adventurer named Godin de St. Croix was sent to the Bastile about the same time that Exili was confined there; Godin having incurred the grave displeasure of the Lieutenant-civil, Dreux d'Aubray, owing to his scandalous familiarity with d'Aubray's daughter Margaret, Marchioness of Brinvilliers. While in the Bastile he learned from Exili the art of secret poisoning; and so on his release instructed his paramour, the Marchioness, so thoroughly that she ultimately became one of the most famous characters in the annals of criminal toxicology.

At the time these two Italians were arrested a secret society of prisoners, similar to the organizations at Rome and Naples, previously spoken of, had been established through their agency. The celebrated fortune-teller, La Voisin, together with one La Vigoreux and two priests, were the chief characters in this strange society, and those who desired to rid themselves of rich relations with a view to inheritance, who sought to be revenged on enemies, or who desired to do away with a wife or husband, were not slow

to avail themselves of the opportunities held out to them by the poisoners. La Voisin soon became famous for the accuracy of her predictions regarding deaths, and her packets of "succession powders" never failed to produce the desired result. These women were tortured and burnt at the stake, but they died reticent. Nevertheless, sufficient information was obtained from other sources to implicate persons of high rank in the conspiracy, among whom the Countess of Soissons figures among the most guilty. In consideration of her high rank she was simply banished from the country. She ultimately obtained admission to the Spanish Court, where she succeeded in poisoning Maria Louisa, wife of Charles II, by presenting her with a draught of milk containing, it is supposed, corrosive sublimate. The same poison is believed to have been used in the fatal drink of succory water by which Henrietta of England, mother of Maria Louisa, came to her death. In the latter case it had been rubbed on the cup containing the succory water. The stomachs of these victims, and also those of the father of the Marchioness Brinvilliers were found on examination to have been partially eaten away by the poison. The liver presented the appearance of burnt flesh, and the walls of the stomach are described as having turned black and sloughed off in pieces.

The Marchioness Brinvilliers, it is said first tried her skill upon patients in the hospital called Hotel Dieu, which she used to visit daily, bringing with her sweetmeats and biscuits for the sick. All who ate of them died; and it became a saying in Paris that no young physician first entering on practice ever contributed so well to fill a churchyard as did Brinvilliers. She succeeded in poisoning her father and her two brothers, but failed, much to her chagrin, in an

attempt to poison her sister. A story goes to the effect that she attempted on several occasions to poison her husband, the Marquis, in order that she might marry Gotheric de St. Croix; but that St. Croix not wishing to marry her upon any consideration, always defeated her aims by administering an antidote to the Marquis. Brinvilliers was not detected in her deviltry until after the death of St. Croix, who was found one day lifeless in his laboratory, apparently suffocated by the fumes of some noxious chemical. It was his custom to perform his experiment with a glass mask on, and this, falling off, caused his death. In the laboratory was found a casket containing poisons in all stages of development; some bottled with labels recording their effects upon animals, some in powders, some greatly resembling the celebrated *aqua Tofana*—together with a quantity of raw material used in manufacturing them, including no less than seventy-five pounds of corrosive sublimate alone, not to speak of antimony, lunar caustic, and vitriol in large proportions. On the lid of this casket was pasted a written request that, in case of the owner's death, it be dispatched unopened to the Marchioness Brinvilliers, as it could be of no use to any one else. The Marchioness, hearing of the seizure of the casket by the Government officers, attempted to obtain it by bribery, and failing in this end, suddenly fled the country. La Chausee, the valet of St. Croix, was foolhardy enough to lay claim to the poisons soon after, and was rewarded for his pains by being broken alive on the wheel. The Marchioness was followed to a convent at Liège where she had taken refuge, and whence she was enticed by a shrewd detective disguised as an abbe. She was subsequently tortured and burned alive; and it is said that her written confessions and the proceed-

ings of her trials were burned with her, lest the secrets of her pernicious art should at any future time become known.

Happily, the mysteries of such arts are readily solvable by the chemistry of to-day, which even avails itself of the spectroscope in poison-analysis. But the arts of the mediæval poisoners were superior to the skill of mediæval physicians; and the crime that rendered Brinvilliers ever notorious, did not cease with her frightful punishment in 1676. On the 20th of December, 1765, the Dauphin, father of Louis XVI, died from poison; and the Dauphiness perished in a similar manner in 1767. This crime was by no means confined to France and Italy. Charles XI, of Sweden, is said to have died from the administration of a poison so violently corrosive that on *post-mortem* examination the intestines were found perforated with innumerable ulcers. (An intestinal poison, said to consist of powdered diamond-dust or ground hair, was much in vogue among the poisoners of antiquity.) But at no Court were the arts of the secret poisoners so extraordinarily successful as at that of the Czars of Russia.

According to an old Byzantine custom the early Czars were accustomed to choose their wives from among all the beauties of the Empire, the handsomest girls being collected together by the royal emissaries at the capital. Physicians and midwives were summoned to examine the maidens, and out of perhaps three thousand not thirty would always pass such an examination successfully, as occurred at the time when Ivan the Terrible chose his third wife. The history of these strange marriages is very interesting, but it is also very shocking. The Czarina, on entering the Terem as the wife of the Emperor, naturally raised her own family to a position of power and influence, and at the same time took



away precedence from the relatives of the former Czarina. Rivalry and hatred were the necessary result of such a state of things, and the girl Czarina, often only a simple-minded peasant, found herself at once environed with cunning and powerful enemies, skilled to a wonderful degree in the art of secret poisoning. These assassins of the Russian court were seldom or ever detected in their crimes, and yet their crimes were equal to any perpetrated in Italy. The early Czarinas seldom lived to middle age, and no human precautions seemed capable of securing them against assassination. Ivan Vassilievitch, the Terrible, lost three wives in this manner, one after another. Ivan complained to the Assembly of Bishops that his third wife, Marfa Sobakine, died of poison only two weeks after the marriage; and it is scarcely to be wondered that Ivan massacred his nobles, in the frantic hope that the guilty might perish with the innocent. Boris Goudenof administered to all his household an oath to the effect that they would not attempt to poison the food, clothing or drink of his Czarina.

The character of such poisons as those of the middle ages can only be guessed at; but it is at least certain that they were by no means confined to simple solutions of arsenic or to those mineral and vegetable poisons most commonly used by the modern suicides or secret assassins of the civilized world. The civilized world of to-day knows of but one class of really secret poisons, namely, those in use by the tribes of Central Africa (probably the same used by Voodoo Doctors in America), and those used by the South American Indians and the inhabitants of the Malay Peninsula, in all of which countries the natives poison their arrows. Of late years great attention has been given to the subject of these poisons by Weir Mitchell and others; and

many curious facts have been discovered concerning the woorara poison especially. Like snake-venom, which is said to enter largely into the composition of some of them, these poisons leave no trace of their presence in the system, and appear to be of a zymotic character. Some varieties are prepared from the juices of poisonous creepers; others from putrescent animal matter; others from a variety of ingredients. Garcillaso de la Vega speaks of the decomposing matter of human flesh as being used by certain tribes of Indians, and also remarks that they considered the flesh of a red-headed Spaniard as capable of producing a superior kind of poison. Some of these savages seem to have discovered the fact that if the pus of one animal be injected into the veins of another, the pus as taken from the second animal is far more virulent, and may be further intensified in the flesh of a third animal. But the conflicting statements of travelers render it probable that almost every tribe manufactures a different variety of poison. Modern scientific investigation has wholly failed to discover the precise character of these poisons, or to furnish antidotes; just as it has failed to discover the nature of snake-venom. It cannot be denied that the animal and vegetable world both continue to furnish man with materials against whose destructive force our toxic science as yet availeth little.

## LEVEE LIFE

HAUNTS AND PASTIMES OF THE ROUSTABOUTS  
THEIR ORIGINAL SONGS AND PECULIAR DANCES

Along the river-banks on either side of the levee slope, where the brown water year after year climbs up to the ruined sidewalks, and pours into the warehouse cellars, and paints their grimy walls with streaks of water-weed green, may be studied a most curious and interesting phase of life—the life of a community within a community,—a society of wanderers who have haunts but not homes, and who are only connected with the static society surrounding them by the common bond of State and municipal law. It is a very primitive kind of life; its lights and shadows are alike characterized by a half savage simplicity; its happiness or misery is almost purely animal; its pleasures are wholly of the hour, neither enhanced nor lessened by anticipations of the morrow. It is always pitiful rather than shocking; and it is not without some little charm of its own—the charm of a thoughtless existence, whose virtues are all original, and whose vices are for the most part foreign to it. A great portion of this levee-life haunts also the subterranean hovels and ancient frame buildings of the district lying east of Broadway to Culvert street, between Sixth and Seventh streets. But, on a cool spring evening, when the levee is bathed in moonlight, and the torch-basket lights dance redly upon the water, and the clear air vibrates to the sonorous music of the deep-toned steam-whistle, and the sound of wild banjo-thrumming floats out through

the open doors of the levee dance-houses, then it is perhaps that one can best observe the peculiarities of this grotesquely-picturesque roustabout life.

Probably less than one-third of the stevedores and 'longshoremen employed in our river traffic are white; but the calling now really belongs by right to the negroes, who are by far the best roustabouts and are unrivaled as firemen. The white stevedores are generally tramps, willing to work only through fear of the workhouse; or, some times laborers unable to obtain other employment, and glad to earn money for the time being at any employment. On board the boats, the whites and blacks mess separately and work under different mates, there being on an average about twenty-five roustabouts to every boat which unloads at the Cincinnati levee. Cotton boats running on the Lower Mississippi will often carry sixty or seventy deck-hands, who can some seasons earn from forty-five dollars to sixty dollars per month. On the Ohio boats the average wages paid to roustabouts will not exceed \$30 per month. 'Longshoremen earn fifteen and twenty cents per hour, according to the season. These are frequently hired by Irish contractors, who undertake to unload a boat at so much per package; but the first-class boats generally contract with the 'longshoremen directly through the mate, and sometimes pay twenty-five cents per hour for such labor. "Before Freedom," as the colored folks say, white laborers performed most of the roustabout labor on the steamboats; the negroes are now gradually monopolizing the calling, chiefly by reason of their peculiar fitness for it. Generally speaking, they are the best porters in the world; and in the cotton States, it is not uncommon, we are told, to see negro levee hands for a wager, carry five-

hundred-pound cotton-bales on their backs to the wharf-boat. River men, to-day, are recognizing the superior value of negro labor in steamboat traffic, and the colored roustabouts are now better treated, probably, than they have been since the war. Under the present laws, too, they are better protected. It used at one time to be a common thing for some ruffianly mate to ship sixty or seventy stevedores, and, after the boat had taken in all her freight, to hand the poor fellows their money and land them at some small town, or even in the woods, hundreds of miles from their home. This can be done no longer with legal impunity.

Roustabout life in the truest sense is, then, the life of the colored population of the Rows, and, partly, of Bucktown—blacks and mulattoes from all parts of the States, but chiefly from Kentucky and Eastern Virginia, where most of them appear to have toiled on the plantations before Freedom; and echoes of the old plantation life still live in their songs and their pastimes. You may hear old Kentucky slave songs chanted nightly on the steamboats, in that wild, half-melancholy key peculiar to the natural music of the African race; and you may see the old slave dances nightly performed to the air of some ancient Virginia-reel in the dance-houses of Sausage Row, or the "ball-rooms" of Bucktown. There is an intense uniqueness about all this pariah existence; its boundaries are most definitely fixed; its enjoyments are wholly sensual, and many of them are marked by peculiarities of a strictly local character. Many of their songs, which have never appeared in print, treat of levee life in Cincinnati, of all the popular steamboats running on the "Muddy Water," and of the favorite roustabout haunts on the river bank and in Bucktown. To collect these curious songs, or even

all the most popular of them, would be a labor of months, and even then a difficult one, for the colored roustabouts are in the highest degree suspicious of a man who approaches them with a note-book and pencil. Occasionally, however, one can induce an intelligent steamboatman to sing a few river songs by an innocent bribe in the shape of a cigar or a drink, and this we attempted to do with considerable success during a few spare evenings last week, first, in a popular roustabout haunt on Broadway, near Sixth, and afterward in a dingy frame cottage near the corner of Sixth and Culvert streets. Unfortunately some of the most curious of these songs are not of a character to admit of publication in the columns of a daily newspaper; but others which we can present to our readers may prove interesting. Of these the following song, *Number Ninety-Nine*, was at one time immensely popular with the steamboatmen. The original resort referred to was situated on Sixth and Culvert street, where Kirk's building now stands. We present the song with some necessary emendations:

“You may talk about yer railroads,  
 Yer steamboats and can-*el*  
 If 't hadn't been for Liza Jane  
 There wouldn't bin no hell.

Chorus—Oh, ain't I gone, gone, gone,  
 Oh, ain't I gone, gone, gone,  
 Oh, ain't I gone, gone, gone,  
 Way down de ribber road.

“Whar do you get yer whisky?  
 Whar do you get yer rum?  
 I got it down in Bucktown,  
 At Number Ninety-nine.

Chorus—Oh, ain't I gone, gone, gone, etc.

"I went down to Bucktown,  
   Nebber was dar before,  
 Great big niggah knocked me down,  
   But Katy barred the door.  
       Chorus—Oh, ain't I gone, gone, gone, etc.

"She hugged me, she kissed me,  
   She told me not to cry;  
 She said I wus de sweetest thing  
   Dat ebber libbed or died.  
       Chorus—Oh, ain't I gone, gone, gone, etc.

. . . . .

"Yonder goes the Wildwood,  
   She's loaded to the guards,  
 But yonder comes the Fleetwood,  
   An' she's the boat for me.  
       Chorus—Oh, ain't I gone, gone, gone, etc.

The words, " 'Way down to Rockingham," are sometimes substituted in the chorus, for " 'way down de ribber road."

One of the most popular roustabout songs now sung on the Ohio is the following. The air is low, and melancholy, and when sung in unison by the colored crew of a vessel leaving or approaching port, has a strange, sad sweetness about it which is very pleasing. The two-fold character of poor Molly, at once good and bad, is somewhat typical of the stevedore's sweetheart:

"Molly was a good gal and a bad gal, too.  
       Oh Molly, row, gal.  
 Molly was a good gal and a bad gal, too,  
       Oh Molly, row, gal.

## Levee Life

I'll row dis boat and I'll row no more,  
     Row, Molly, row, gal.  
 I'll row dis boat, and I'll go on shore,  
     Row, Molly, row, gal.

Captain on the biler deck a-heaving of the lead,  
     Oh Molly, row, gal.  
 Calling to the pilot to give her, 'Turn ahead,'  
     Row, Molly, row, gal."

Here is another to a slow and sweet air. The chorus,  
 when well sung, is extremely pretty:

"Shawneetown is burnin' down,  
     Who tole you so?  
 Shawneetown is burnin' down,  
     Who tole you so?"

Cythie, my darlin' gal,  
     Who tole you so?  
 Cythie, my darlin' gal,  
     How do you know?

Chorus—Shawneetown is burnin', etc.

How the h—l d'ye 'spect me to hold her,  
     Way down below?  
 I've got no skin on either shoulder,  
     Who tole you so?

Chorus—Shawneetown is burnin', etc.

De houses dey is all on fire,  
     Way down below.  
 De houses dey is all on fire,  
     Who tole you so?



Chorus—Shawneetown is burnin', etc.

My old missus tole me so,  
 Way down below.  
 An' I b'lieve what ole missus says,  
 Way down below."

Chorus—Shawneetown is burnin', etc.

The most melancholy of all these plaintive airs is that to which the song "Let her go by" is commonly sung. It is generally sung on leaving port, and sometimes with an affecting pathos inspired of the hour, while the sweethearts of the singers watch the vessel gliding down stream.

"I'm going away to New Orleans!  
 Good-by, my lover, good-by!  
 I'm going away to New Orleans!  
 Good-by, my lover, good-by!  
 Oh, let her go by!

She's on her way to New Orleans!  
 Good-by, my lover, good-by!  
 She bound to pass the Robert E. Lee,  
 Good-by, my lover, good-by!  
 Oh, let her go by!

I'll make dis trip and I'll make no more!  
 Good-by, my lover, good-by!  
 I'll roll dese barrels, I'll roll no more!  
 Good-by, my lover, good-by!  
 Oh, let her go by!

An' if you are not true to me,  
 Farewell, my lover, farewell!

## Levee Life

An' if you are not true to me,  
 Farewell, my lover, farewell!  
 Oh, let her go by!"

The next we give is of a somewhat livelier description. It has, we believe, been printed in a somewhat different form in certain song books. We give it as it was sung to us in a Broadway saloon:

"I come down the mountain,  
 An' she come down the lane,  
 An' all that I could say to her  
 Was, Good-by, 'Liza Jane."

Chorus—Farewell, 'Liza Jane!  
 Farewell, 'Liza Jane!  
 Don't throw yourself away, for I  
 Am coming back again.

I got up on a house-top,  
 An give my horn a blow;  
 Thought I heerd Miss Dinah say,  
 "Yonder comes your beau."  
 [Chorus.]

Ef I'd a few more boards,  
 To build my chimney higher,  
 I'd keep aroun' the country gals,  
 Chunkin' up the fire.  
 [Chorus.]

The following are fragments of rather lengthy chants, the words being almost similar in both, but the choruses and airs being very different. The air of the first is sono-

rous and regularly slow, like a sailor's chant when heaving anchor, the air of the next is quick and lively.

"Belle-a-Lee's got no time,  
 Oh, Belle! oh, Belle!  
 Robert E. Lee's got railroad time,  
 Oh, Belle! oh, Belle!

Wish I was in Mobile Bay,  
 Oh, Belle! oh, Belle!  
 Rollin' cotton by de day,  
 Oh, Belle! oh, Belle!

. . . . .  
 "I wish I was in Mobile Bay,  
 Rollin' cotton by de day,  
 Stow'n' sugar in de hull below,  
 Below, belo-ow,  
 Stow'n' sugar in de hull below!

"De Natchez is a new boat; she's just in her prime,  
 Beats any oder boat on de New Orleans line.  
 Stow'n' sugar in de hull below, &c.

"Engineer, t'rough de trumpet, gives de firemen news,  
 Couldn' make steam for de fire in de flues.  
 Stow'n' sugar in de hull below, &c.

"Cap'n on de biler deck, a scratchin' of his head,  
 Hollers to de deck hand to heave de larbo'rd lead.  
 Stow'n' sugar in de hull below, &c.

. . . . .  
 Perhaps the prettiest of all these songs is *The Wandering Steamboatman*. Which, like many other roustabout

songs, rather frankly illustrates the somewhat loose morality of the calling:

“I am a wandering steamboatman,  
And far away from home;  
I fell in love with a pretty gal,  
And she in love with me.

She took me to her parlor  
And cooled me with her fan;  
She whispered in her mother’s ear:  
‘I love the steamboatman.’”

The mother entreats her daughter not to become engaged to the stevedore. “You know,” she says, “that he is a steamboatman, and has a wife at New Orleans.” But the steamboatman replies, with great nonchalance:

“If I’ve a wife at New Orleans  
I’m neither tied nor bound;  
And I’ll forsake my New Orleans wife  
If you’ll be truly mine.”

Another very curious and decidedly immoral song is popular with the loose women of the “Rows.” We can only give one stanza:

“I hev a roustabout for my man—  
Livin’ with a white man for a sham,  
Oh, leave me alone,  
Leave me alone,  
I’d like you much better if you’d leave me alone.”

But the most famous songs in vogue among the roustabouts is *Limber Jim*, or *Shiloh*. Very few know it all by

heart, which is not wonderful when we consider that it requires something like twenty minutes to sing *Limber Jim* from beginning to end, and that the whole song, if printed in full, would fill two columns of the *Commercial*. The only person in the city who can sing the song through, we believe, is a colored laborer living near Sixth and Culvert streets, who "run on the river" for years, and acquired so much of a reputation by singing *Limber Jim*, that he has been nicknamed after the mythical individual aforesaid, and is now known by no other name. He keeps a little resort in Bucktown, which is known as "Limber Jim's," and has a fair reputation for one dwelling in that locality. Jim very good-naturedly sang the song for us a few nights ago, and we took down some of the most striking verses for the benefit of our readers. The air is wonderfully quick and lively, and the chorus is quite exciting. The leading singer sings the whole song, excepting the chorus, *Shiloh*, which dissyllable is generally chanted by twenty or thirty voices of abysmal depth at the same time with a sound like the roar of twenty Chinese gongs struck with tremendous force and precision. A great part of *Limber Jim* is very profane, and some of it not quite fit to print. We can give only about one-tenth part of it. The chorus is frequently accompanied with that wonderfully rapid slapping of thighs and hips known as "patting Juba."

Nigger an' a white man playing seven-up,  
White man played an ace; an' nigger feared to take it up,  
White man played ace an' nigger played a nine,  
White man died, an' nigger went blind.

Limber Jim,  
[All.] Shiloh!

Talk it agin,  
 [All.] Shiloh!  
 Walk back in love,  
 [All.] Shiloh!  
 You turtle-dove,  
 [All.] Shiloh!

Went down the ribber, couldn't get across;  
 Hopped on a rebel louse; thought 'twas a hoss,  
 Oh lor', gals, 't aint no lie,  
 Lice in Camp Chase big enough to cry,—  
 Limber Jim, etc.

Bridle up a rat, sir; saddle up a cat,  
 Please han' me down my Leghorn hat,  
 Went to see widow; widow warn't home;  
 Saw to her daughter,—she gave me honeycomb.  
 Limber Jim, etc.

Jay-bird sittin' on a swinging limb,  
 Winked at me an' I winked at him.  
 Up with a rock an' struck him on the shin,  
 G—d d—n yer soul, don't wink again.  
 Limber Jim, etc.

Some folks says that a rebel can't steal,  
 I found twenty in my corn-fiel',  
 Sich pullin' of shucks an' tearin' of corn!—  
 Nebber saw the like since I was born.  
 Limber Jim, etc.

John Morgan come to Danville and cut a mighty dash,  
 Las' time I saw him, he was under whip an' lash;  
 'Long come a rebel at a sweepin' pace,  
 Whar 're ye goin', Mr. Rebel? "I'm goin' to Camp Chase."  
 Limber Jim, etc.

Way beyond de sun an' de moon,  
 White gal tole me I were too soon.  
 White gal tole me I come to soon,  
 An' nigger gal called me an ole d—d fool.

Limber Jim, etc.

Eighteen pennies hidden in a fence,  
 Cynthia gals ain't got no sense;  
 Every time they go from home  
 Comb thar heads wid an ole jaw bone.

Limber Jim, etc.

Had a little wife an' didn' inten' to keep her;  
 Showed her a flatboat an' sent her down de ribber;  
 Head like a fodder-shock, mouf like a shovel,  
 Put yerself wid yaller gal, put yerself in trouble.

Limber Jim, etc.

I went down to Dinah's house, Dinah was in bed,  
 Hoisted de window an' poked out her head;  
 T'rowed, an' I hit in her de eyeball,—bim;  
 "Walk back, Mr. Nigger; don't do dat again."

Limber Jim, etc.

Gambling man in de railroad line,  
 Saved my ace an' played my nine;  
 If you want to know my name,  
 My name's High-low-jack-in-the-game.

Limber Jim,  
 Shiloh!

Talk it again,  
 Shiloh!

You dancing girl,  
 Shiloh!

Sure's you're born,  
 Shiloh!

## Levee Life

Grease my heel with butter in the fat,  
I can talk to Limber Jim better'n dat.

    Limber Jim,  
            Shiloh!

    Limber Jim,  
            Shiloh!

    Walk back in love,  
            Shiloh!

    My turtle dove,  
            Shiloh!

[Patting Juba]—And you can't go yonder,

    Limber Jim!

    And you can't go yonder,

    Limber Jim!

    And you can't go-oo-o!

One fact worth mentioning about these negro singers is, that they can mimic the Irish accent to a degree of perfection which an American, Englishman or German could not hope to acquire. At the request of Patrolman Tighe and his partner, the same evening that we interviewed Limber Jim, a very dark mulatto, named Jim Delaney, sang for us in capital style that famous Irish ditty known as "The hat me fahther wor-re." Yet Jim, notwithstanding his name, has little or no Irish blood in his veins; nor has his companion, Jim Harris, who joined in the rollicking chorus:

    "'Tis the raylics of ould dacency,  
    The hat me fahther wor-r-re."

Jim Delaney would certainly make a reputation for Irish specialties in a minstrel troupe; his mimicry of Irish charac-



ter is absolutely perfect, and he possesses a voice of great flexibility, depth and volume. He "runs" on the river.

On the southeast corner of Culvert and Sixth streets, opposite to the house in which we were thus entertained by Limber Jim and his friends, stands Kirk's building, now occupied jointly by Kirk and Ryan. Two stories beneath this building is now the most popular dance-house of the colored steamboatmen and their "girls." The building and lot belong to Kirk; but Ryan holds a lease on the basement and half of the upper building. Recently the landlord and the leaseholder had a falling out, and are at bitter enmity; but Ryan seems to have the upper hand in the matter, and is making considerable money from the roustabouts. He has closed up the old side entrance, admission to the ball-room being now obtainable only through the bar-room, and the payment of ten cents. A special policeman has been wisely hired by the proprietor to preserve order below, and the establishment is, generally speaking, well conducted for an establishment of the kind. The amount of patronage it receives depends almost wholly upon the condition of the river traffic; during the greater part of the week the attendance is somewhat slim, but when the New Orleans boats come in the place is crowded to overflowing. Beside the admittance fee of ten cents, an additional dime is charged to all the men for every set danced—the said dime to be expended in "treating partners." When the times are hard and money scarce, the girls often pay the fees for their men in order to make up sets.

With its unplastered and windowless limestone walls; sanded floor; ruined ceiling, half plank, half cracked plaster; a dingy black counter in one corner, and rude benches ranged along the walls, this dancing-room presented rather

an outlandish aspect when we visited it. At the corner of the room opposite "the bar," a long bench was placed, with its face to the wall; and upon the back of this bench, with their feet inwardly reclining upon the seat, sat the musicians. A well-dressed, neatly-built mulatto picked the banjo, and a somewhat lighter colored musician led the music with a fiddle, which he played remarkably well and with great spirit. A short, stout negress, illy dressed, with a rather good-natured face and a bed shawl tied about her head, played the bass viol, and that with no inexperienced hand. This woman is known to the police as Anna Nun.

The dancers were in sooth a motley crew: the neat dresses of the girls strongly contrasting with the rags of the poorer roustabouts, some of whom were clad only in shirt, pants and shocking hats. Several wickedly handsome women were smoking stogies. Bill Williams, a good-natured black giant, who keeps a Bucktown saloon, acted for a while as Master of Ceremonies. George Moore, the colored Democrat who killed, last election day, the leader of a party who attacked his house, figured to advantage in the dance, possessing wonderful activity in spite of his heavy bulk. The best performer on the floor was a stumpy little roustabout named Jem Scott, who is a marvelous jig-dancer, and can waltz with a tumbler full of water on his head without spilling a drop. One-fourth of the women present were white, including two girls only about seventeen years old, but bearing physiognomical evidence of precocious vice. The best-looking girl in the room was a tall, lithe quadron named Mary Brown, with auburn hair, gray eyes, a very fair skin, and an air of quiet innocence wholly at variance with her reputation. A short, supple mulatto girl, with a

blue ribbon in her hair, who attracted considerable admiration, and was famous for dancing "breakdowns," had but recently served a term in the penitentiary for grand larceny. Another woman present, a gigantic negress, wearing a red plaid shawl, and remarkable for an immense head of frizzly hair, was, we were informed, one of the most adroit thieves known to the police. It was a favorite trick of hers to pick a pocket while dancing, and hide the stolen money in her hair.

"How many of those present do you suppose carry knives?" we asked Patrolman Tighe."

"All of them," was the reply. "All the men, and women, too, carry knives or razors; and many of them pistols as well. But they seldom quarrel, except about a girl. Their great vice is thieving; and the fights down here are generally brought about by white roughs who have no business in this part of town except crime."

The musicians struck up that weird, wild, lively air, known perhaps to many of our readers as the "Devil's Dream," and in which "the musical ghost of a cat chasing the spectral ghost of a rat" is represented by a succession of "miauls" and "squeaks" on the fiddle. The dancers danced a double quadrille, at first, silently and rapidly; but warming with the wild spirit of the music, leaped and shouted, swinging each other off the floor, and keeping time with a precision which shook the building in time to the music. The women, we noticed, almost invariably embraced the men about the neck in swinging, the men clasping them about the waist. Sometimes the men advancing leaped and crossed legs with a double shuffle, and with almost sightless rapidity. Then the music changed to an old Virginia reel, and the dancing changing likewise, pre-

sented the most grotesque spectacle imaginable. The dancing became wild; men patted juba and shouted, the negro women danced with the most fantastic grace, their bodies describing almost incredible curves forward and backward; limbs intertwined rapidly in a wrestle with each other and with the music; the room presented a tide of swaying bodies and tossing arms, and flying hair. The white female dancers seemed heavy, cumbersome, ungainly by contrast with their dark companions; the spirit of the music was not upon them; they were abnormal to the life about them. Once more the music changed—to some popular Negro air, with the chorus—

“Don’t get weary,  
I’m goin’ home.”

The musicians began to sing; the dancers joined in; and the dance terminated with a roar of song, stamping of feet, “patting juba,” shouting, laughing, reeling. Even the curious spectators involuntarily kept time with their feet; it was the very drunkenness of music, the intoxication of the dance. Amid such scenes does the roustabout find his heaven; and this heaven is certainly not to be despised.

The great dancing resort for steamboatmen used to be Picket’s, on Sausage Row; but year after year the river came up and flooded all the grimy saloons on the Rows, and, departing, left behind it alluvial deposits of yellow mud, and the Spirit of Rheumatic Dampness. So, about two months ago, Picket rented out his old quarters, partly as a barber-shop, partly as a shooting-gallery, and moved into the building, No. 91 Front street, between Ludlow and Lawrence. He has had the whole building renovated

throughout, and painted the front very handsomely. The basement on the river side is now used for a dancing-room; but the room is very small, and will not accommodate half of the dancers who used to congregate in the old building. The upper part of the building the old man rents out to river men and their wives or mistresses, using the second floor for a restaurant and dining rooms, which are very neatly fitted up. Whatever may have been the old man's sins, Pickett has a heart full of unselfish charity sufficient to cover them all. Year after year, through good or ill-fortune, he has daily fed and maintained fifty or sixty homeless and needy steamboatmen. Sometimes when the river trade "looks up," and all the boats are running on full time, some grateful levee hand repays his benefactor, but it is very seldom. And the old man never asks for it or expects it; he only says: "Boys, when you want to spend your money, spend it here." Although now very old, and almost helpless from a rupture, Pickett has yet but to rap on the counter of his saloon to enforce instantaneous quiet. The roustabouts will miss the old man when he is gone—the warm corner to sleep in, the simple but plentiful meal when out of a berth, and the rough kindness of his customary answer to a worthless, hungry, and shivering applicant for food and lodging, "G—d d—n you, you don't deserve it; but come in and behave yourself." The day is not far off when there will be great mourning along the levee.

With the exception of Ryan's dance-house, and one or two Bucktown lodging-houses, the roustabouts generally haunt the Rows, principally Sausage Row, from Broadway to Ludlow street. Rat Row, from Walnut to Main, is more especially the home of the white tramps and roust-

abouts. Here is situated the celebrated "Blazing Stump," otherwise called St. James Restaurant, which is kept by a Hollander, named Venneman. Venneman accommodates only white men, and endeavors to keep an orderly house; but the "Blazing Stump" must always remain a resort for thieves, burglars, and criminals of every description. The "Stump" is No. 13 Rat Row. No. 16 is a lodging house for colored roustabouts, kept by James Madison. No. 12 is a policy shop; although it pretends to be a saloon; and the business is so cunningly conducted that the police cannot, without special privilege, succeed in closing up the business. No. 10, which used to be known as Buckner's, is another haunt for colored roustabouts. They have a pet crow attached to the establishment, which is very plucky, and can whip all the cats and dogs in the neighborhood. It waddles about on the sidewalk of sunny days, pecking fiercely at any stranger who meddles with it, but the moment it sees the patrolmen coming along the levee it runs into the house.

No. 7—Goodman's clothing store—is said to be a "fence." At the west end of the row is Captain Dilg's celebrated hostelry, a popular and hospitable house, frequented by pilots and the most respectable class of river men. At the eastern terminus of the row is the well known Alhambra saloon, a great resort for colored steamboatmen, where large profits are realized on cigars and whisky of the cheapest kind. The contractors who hire roustabouts frequently have a private understanding with the proprietor of some levee coffee-house or saloon, and always go there to pay off their hands. Then the first one treats, then another, and so on until all the money just made by a day's heavy labor is

lying in the counter drawer, and the roustabouts are helplessly boozy.

Of the two rows Sausage Row is perhaps the most famous. No. 1 is kept by old Barney Hodke, who has made quite a reputation by keeping a perfectly orderly house in a very disorderly neighborhood. No. 2 is Cottonbrook's clothing store, *alias* the "American Clothing Store," whereof the proprietor is said to have made a fortune by selling cheap clothing to the negro stevedores. No. 3 is Mrs. Sweeney's saloon and boarding house, an orderly establishment for the entertainment of river men. No. 4 is an eating- and lodging-house for roustabouts, kept by Frank Fortner, a white man. No. 6 is a barber-shop for colored folks, with a clothing-store next to it. No. 7 is a house of ill-fame, kept by a white woman, Mary Pearl, who boards several unfortunate white girls. This is a great resort for colored men.

No. 8 is Maggie Sperlock's. Maggie has another saloon in Bucktown. She is a very fat and kind-hearted old mulatto woman, who is bringing up half a dozen illegitimate children, abandoned by their parents. One of these, a very pretty boy, is said to be the son of a white lady, who moves in good society, by a colored man.

No. 9 is now Chris. Meyer's; it was known as "Schwabe Kate's" when Meyer's wife lived. This is the great resort for German tramps.

Next in order come a barber-shop and shooting-gallery—"Long Branch" and "Saratoga." These used to be occupied by Pickett.

A few doors east of this is Chas. Redman's saloon, kept by a crippled soldier. This is another great roustabout

haunt, where robberies are occasionally committed. And a little further east is Pickett's new hotel. On these two Rows Officers Brazil and Knox have made no less than two hundred and fifty-six arrests during the past two years. The most troublesome element is, of course, among the white tramps.

A number of the colored men are adroit thieves; these will work two or three months and then "lay off" until all their money has found its way to whisky-shops and brothels. The little clothing and shoe stores along the levee are almost daily robbed of some articles by such fellows, who excel in ingenious confidence dodges. A levee hand with extinct cigar will, for example, walk into a shoe shop with a "Say, bohss, giv a fellah a light." While the "bohss" is giving a light to the visitor, who always takes care to stand between the proprietor and the doorway, a confederate sneaks off with a pair of shoes. A fellow called "China Robinson," who hangs about Madison's, is said to be famous at such tricks. The police officers, however, will not allow any known sluggard or thief to loaf about the levee for more than thirty days without employment. There is always something to do for those who wish to do it, and roustabouts who persist in idleness and dirt, after one or two friendly warnings, get sent to the Workhouse.

Half of the colored 'longshoremen used at one time to wear only a coat and pants, winter and summer; but now they are a little more careful of themselves, and fearful of being sent to the Workhouse to be cleaned up. Consequently, when Officer Brazil finds a very ragged and dirty specimen of levee life on the Row, he has seldom occasion to warn him more than once to buy himself a shirt and a change of garments.



Generally speaking, the women give very little trouble. Some of the white girls now living in Pickett's barracks or in Bucktown brothels are of respectable parentage. Two of the most notorious are sisters, who have a sad history. They are yet rather handsome. All these women are morphine eaters, and their greatest dread is to be sent to the Workhouse, and being thus deprived of this stimulant. Some who were sent to the Workhouse, we were told, had died there from want of it. The white girls of the Row soon die, however, under any circumstances; their lives are often fairly burnt out with poisonous whisky and reckless dissipation before they have haunted the levee more than two or three years. After a fashion, the roustabouts treat their women kindly, with a rough good nature that is peculiar to them; many of the women are really married. But faithfulness to a roustabout husband is considered quite an impossible virtue on the levee. The stevedores are mostly too improvident and too lazy to support their "gals." While the men are off on a trip, a girl will always talk about what she will be able to buy "when my man comes back—if he has any money." When the lover does come back, sometimes after a month's absence, he will perhaps present his "gal" with fifty cents, or at most a dollar, and thinks he has done generously by her. We are speaking in general terms, of course, and alluding to the mass of the colored roustabouts who "run on the river" all their lives, and have no other calling. It is needless to say that there are thrifty and industrious stevedores who support their families well, and will finally leave the river for some more lucrative employment.

Such is a glimpse of roustabout life. They know of no other life; they can understand no other pleasures. Their

whole existence is one vision of anticipated animal pleasure or of animal misery; of giant toil under the fervid summer sun; of toil under the icy glare of the winter moon; of fiery drinks and drunken dreams; of the madness of music and the intoxication of fantastic dances; of white and dark mistresses awaiting their coming at the levees, with waving of brightly colored garments; of the deep music of the great steam whistles; of the torch-basket fires redly dancing upon the purple water, the white stars sailing overhead, the passing lights of well known cabins along the dark river banks, and the mighty panting of the iron heart of the great vessel, bearing them day after day and night after night to fresh scenes of human frailty, and nearer to that Dim Levee slope, where weird boats ever discharge ghostly freight, and depart empty.

# DOLLY

## AN IDYL OF THE LEVEE

“The Lord only,” once observed Officer Patsy Brazil, “knows what Dolly’s real name is.”

Dolly was a brown, broad-shouldered girl of the levee, with the lithe strength of a pantheress in her compactedly-knit figure, and owning one of those peculiar faces which at once attract and puzzle by their very uniqueness—a face that possessed a strange comeliness when viewed at certain angles, especially half-profile, and that would have seemed very soft and youthful but for the shadow of its heavy black brows, perpetually knitted Medusa-wise, as though by everlasting pain, above a pair of great, dark, keen, steady eyes. It was a face, perhaps, rather Egyptian than aught else; fresh with a youthful roundness, and sweetened by a sensitive, passionate, pouting mouth.

Moreover, Dolly’s odd deportment and peculiar attire were fancifully suggestive of those wanton Egyptian women whose portraits were limned on mighty palace walls by certain ancient and forgotten artists—some long-limbed, gauze-clad girls who seem yet to move with a snakish and fantastic grace; others, strong-limbed and deep-bosomed, raimented in a single, close-fitting robe, and wearing their ebon hair loosely flowing in a long thick mass. Dolly appeared to own the elfish grace of the former, together with the more mortal form of the latter. She must have made her own dresses, for no such dresses could have been purchased with love or with money, they were very antique and very grace-

ful. Her favorite dress, a white robe, with a zig-zag border of purple running around the bottom, fitted her almost closely from shoulder to knee, following the sinuous outline of her firm figure, and strongly recalling certain pictures in the Egyptian Department of a famous German work upon the Costumes of Antiquity. Of course Dolly knew nothing of Antiquity or of Egypt—in fact she could neither read nor write; but she had an instinctive æsthetic taste which surmounted those obstacles to good taste in dress which ignorance and fashion jointly create. Her pre-historic aspect was further heightened by her hair,—long, black, thick as a mane, and betraying by its tendency to frizzle the strong tinge of African blood in Dolly's veins. This she generally wore loose to the waist,—a mass so heavy and dense that a breeze could not wave it, and so deeply dark as to recall those irregular daubs of solid black paint whereby the painters of the pyramid-chambers represented the locks of weird court dames. Dolly was very careful of this strange hair; but she indulged, from time to time, in the savage luxury of greasing it with butter. Occasionally, too, she arranged it in a goblin sort of way, by combing it up perpendicularly, so that it flared above her head as though imbued with an electric life of its own. Perhaps she inherited the tendency to these practices from her African blood.

In fact, Dolly was very much of a little savage, despite the evidence of her natural æsthetic taste in dress. The very voluptuousness and freedom of her movements had something savage about it, and she had a wild love for violent physical exercises. She could manage a pair of oars splendidly, and was so perfect a shot that knowing steamboatmen were continually fleeing newcomers by in-

ducing them to bet heavily against Dolly's abilities in the Sausage Row shooting-gallery. Turning her back to the mark, with a looking-glass hung before her, Dolly could fire away all day, and never miss making the drum rattle. Then she could swim like a Tahitian, and before daybreak on sultry summer mornings often stole down to the river to strike out in the moon-silvered current. "Ain't you ashamed to be seen that way?" reproachfully inquired an astonished police officer, one morning, upon encountering Dolly coming up the levee, with a single wet garment clinging about her, and wringing out the water from her frizzly hair.

"Only the pretty moon saw me," replied Dolly, turning her dark eyes gratefully to the rich light.

Dolly was a much better character, on the whole, than her sisters of the levee, chiefly because she seldom quarreled, never committed theft, and seldom got tipsy. Smoke she did, incessantly; for tobacco is a necessity of life on the Row. It was an odd fact that she had no confidants, and never talked about herself. Her reticence, comparative sobriety, and immunity from arrest, together with the fact that she never lacked money enough for the necessities of life, occasioned a peculiar, unpleasant feeling toward her among the other women, which expressed itself in the common saying that Dolly was "putting on airs." Once it became suddenly fashionable on the Row to adorn windows with pots containing some sort of blossoming weed, which these dusky folks euphemistically termed "flowers." Dolly at once "put on airs" by refusing to conform to the growing custom.

"Why don't you have any flower-pots in your window?" curiously queried Patsy Brazil.

"Because," said Dolly, "I ain't a-going to be so d—d mean to the flowers. The Row ain't no place for flowers."

One of her greatest pleasures was to pet a little bandy-legged negro child, whose parents nobody knew, and whom old fat Maggie Sperlock had adopted. She would spend whole hours amusing the little fellow, romping and laughing with him, and twisting her extraordinary hair into all sorts of fantastic horns and goblin devices in order to amuse him. Then she taught him the names of all the great white boats, and the names of the far cities they sailed from, and the odd symbolism of the negro steamboat slang. When a long vessel swept by, plowing up the yellow current in curving furrows about her prow, and leaving in her rear a long line of low-hanging nimbus-clouds, Dolly would cry: "See, Tommy, how proud the old gal is to-day; she's got a fine *ruffle* on. Look at her *switch*, Tommy; see how the old gal's curling her hair out behind her." Dolly could not read the names of the boats, but she knew by heart their gleaming shapes, and the varying tones of their wild, deep voices. So she taught the child to know them, too, until to his infantile fancy they became, as it were, great aquatic things, which slept only at the levee, and moved upon the river through the white moonlight with an awfully pulsating life of their own. She likewise made out of a pine plank for Tommy, a funny little vessel, with a cunning stern-wheel to it, which flung up the water bravely as the child drew it along the shore with a cotton string. And Dolly had no end of terrible stories to tell Tommy, about Voudoos—she called them "hoodoos"—people who gathered heads of snakes, and spiders, and hideous creeping things to make venomous charms with, by steeping them in whisky until the foul liquor became "green as grass."

Tommy would have become frightened out of his little life at these tales, but that Dolly gave him a dried rabbit's foot in a bag to hang round his neck; for Dolly, like all the colored folks of the levee, believed a rabbit's foot to be a sure charm against all evil.

Of course Dolly had "her man"—a rather good-looking yellow roustabout known along the levee as Aleck. In the summer time, when the river was "lively," as the steamboatmen say, she was rather faithful to Aleck; but when the watery highway was all bound in ice, and there was no money on the Row, and Aleck was away on the Lower Mississippi or perhaps out of work, Dolly was decidedly immoral in her mode of life. But Aleck could scarcely expect her to be otherwise, for his money went almost as fast as it came. It was generally a feast or a famine with him. He did come home one spring with forty-odd dollars in his pocket—quite a fortune, he thought it, and a new silver watch for Dolly; but that was, perhaps, the great pecuniary event of his career. Somehow or other the watch did not keep perfect time, and poor Dolly, who knew far more about steamboats than she did about watches, opened the chronometer "to see what was the matter with it."

"Why it,'s got a little hair wound around its guts," said Dolly; "of course it won't go right." Then she pulled out the mainspring. "Such a doggoned funny looking hair," further observed Dolly.

Unlike the other women of the levee, however, Dolly had a little respect for her own person, and did not sell her favors indiscriminately. On the contrary, she managed for a long time to maintain a certain comparative reputation for respectability. And when she did, at last, become utterly abandoned, perhaps the Great Father of each

one of us, black and white, fully pardoned all her poor errors.

For it came to pass in this wise: Aleck one summer evening, became viciously drunk at a Bucktown ball, and got into a free fight, wherein one roustabout, to use Dolly's somewhat hyperbolic expression, "was shot and cut all to pieces." Aleck was only charged at the Hammond Street Police Station with being drunk and disorderly, but inasmuch as it was not his first offense of the kind, he was sentenced to pay a fine of fifty dollars, and to be imprisoned in the Workhouse for a period of thirty days. When the Black Maria had rolled away, and the gaping crowd of loafers had dispersed, after satisfying their unsympathetic curiosity, Dolly wandered into the City Park, and sitting down upon one of the little stone lions at the fountain, cried silently over the broken watch which Aleck had given her. She arose with the resolve to pay Aleck's fine as soon as the thirty days of his Workhouse sentence had expired, and went slowly back to the Row.

Now when Dolly had fairly resolved upon doing a thing, it was generally done. We dare not say too much about how Dolly had resolved to earn that fifty dollars in thirty days—about the only way, indeed, that it was remotely possible for her to earn it on the row. Those who know the social life of the Row will, however, understand the difficulties in Dolly's way. The sudden change in her habits, the recklessness of her life—compared with what it had been; the apparently absolute loss of all the little self-respect she once had, at once excited the surprise of her companions and of the police officers, who watch closely every habitant of the levee. She bought food only when she could not beg it, seldom paid for a cigar, and seemed



to become a ubiquitous character in all the worst haunts of the Row, by night and day.

"If you keep on this way, Dolly," finally exclaimed Patsy Brazil, "I'll 'vag' you." It was then nearly thirty days since Aleck had been sentenced. Patsy, kindly but always firm, never threatened in vain, and Dolly knew it.

It is hardly necessary to say, however, that Dolly had not been able to earn the amount of Aleck's fine, nor is it necessary to state how much she had earned, when Patrolman Brazil was obliged to threaten her with the Workhouse. She had one recourse left, however,—to sell her dresses and her furniture, consisting of a stove, a bed, and an ancient clock—for much less than their pitiful value. She did sell them, and returned from the second-hand store to her bare room, to fall into an exhausted sleep on the floor, hungry and supperless, but happy in the possession of enough money to pay "her man's fine." And Aleck again found himself a free man.

He felt grateful enough to Dolly not to get drunk for a week, which he naturally considered no small piece of self-abnegation in return for his freedom. A keener-eyed man in a blue uniform with brass buttons, who looked into Dolly's great hollow eyes and sunken face with a muttered "God help her!" better understood how dearly that freedom had been purchased. Hunger and sleeplessness had sapped the vitality of Dolly's nervous though vigorous organization. At last Aleck got work on a Maysville packet boat, and sailed away from the levee, and from the ghost of what was once Dolly, waving a red, ragged handkerchief from her window in defiance of Pickett's orders. Just before the regular starting time some one had "toll'd" the boat's bell.

"Who's fooling with that bell," exclaimed Dolly, suddenly dropping her cigar. "It's bad luck to do that." She often thought of the bell again, when week after week the vessel regularly steamed up to the long wharfboat—without Aleck. Aleck had told her that he intended to "see God's people"—the roustabout term for visiting one's home; but she never thought he would have remained away from her so long.

At last one evening while sitting at Pickett's door, filing some little shirt-studs for Aleck out of a well-bleached beef bone, some one told her how Aleck had got married up at Maysville, and what "a tip-top weddin'" it was. Dolly said nothing, but picked up her beef bones and her little file and went up stairs.

"They never die round here," said Patsy Brazil, "until their will's gone. The will dies first." And Dolly's will was dead.

Some women of the levee picked her thin body up from the floor of the empty room and carried her to a bed. Then they sent for old Judge Fox, the gray-haired negro preacher, who keeps a barber-shop on Sausage Row. The old negro's notions of theology were probably peculiar to himself, yet he had comforted more than one dying woman. He closed his shop at once, and came to pray and sing for Dolly, but she heeded neither the prayers nor the strange slave-hymns that he sang. The evening gray deepened to night purple; the moon looked in through the open window at Dolly's thin face; the river reflected its shining ripple on the whitewashed walls within, and through all the sound of the praying and singing there boomed up from below the furious thrumming of banjos and bass viols, and the wild thunder of the dancers' feet. Down stairs the

musicians were playing the tune, *Big Ball Up Town*; upstairs the women were chanting to a weirdly sweet air, *My Jesus Arose*.

Oh, ain't I mighty glad my Jesus arose,  
 Oh, ain't I mighty glad my Jesus arose,  
 Oh, ain't I mighty glad my Jesus arose  
 To send me up on high.

Here comes my pilgrim Jesus,  
 A-riding a milk-white horse;  
 He's rode him to the east and he's rode him to the west,  
 And to every other quarter of the world.  
 Oh, ain't I mighty glad, etc.

Here comes my master Jesus,  
 With heaven in his view,  
 He's goin' home to glory,  
 And bids this world adieu.  
 Oh, ain't I mighty glad, etc.

He'll blow out the sun and burn up the world,  
 And turn that moon to blood,  
 And sinners in ——

"Hush," said Dolly, rising with a desperate effort.  
 "Ain't that the old gal talking?"

A sound deeper and sweeter and wilder than the hymned melody or the half-savage music below, filled all the moon lit levee—the steam-song of the Maysville packet coming in.

"Help me up!" gasped Dolly—"it's the old gal blowing off steam; it's Aleck; it's my man—my man!"

Then she sunk back suddenly, and lay very still—in the stillness of the Dreamless Sleep.

When they went to lay her out, they found something tightly clutched in one little bony hand—so tightly that it required no inconsiderable exertion to force the fingers open.

It was an old silver watch, with the main-spring pulled out.

## BANJO JIM'S STORY

Melancholy, indeed, is the river-view when a rainy day dawns in dull gray light upon the levee—the view of a rapid yellow river under an ashen sky; of distant hills looming dimly through pallid mist; of steamboat smoke hanging sluggishly over the sickly-hued current; and, drearier yet, the ancient fronts of weather-stained buildings on the Row, gloomy masses of discolored brick and stone with gaping joints and shattered windows. Yet of rainy nights the voice of wild merriment echoes loudest along the levee,—the shouts of the lithe dancers and the throbbing of bass viols and the thrumming of banjos and the shrieking of fiddles seem to redouble in volume.

On breezy, bright nights, when the stars glow overhead, and the ruffled breast of the river reflects the sky-purple or the rich silver of a full moon, the dusky folks seek mirth for mirth's sake. But in nights of foul weather and fog, some say the merriment of the Row is attributable to the same strange cause which prompts solitary men in desolate houses or desert places by night to seek relief from loneliness by waking echoes in the gloom with shout or song.

Ghostly at all times, especially to those who live in old dwellings, are rainy nights; full of creeping sounds and awesome echoes and unaccountable knockings and mysterious noises, as of foot-falls upon ancient floors, that groan when walked upon. Now, the old Row is faced with old houses, and they say that of rainy nights the dead hide in the shadowy old doorways and haunt the dark nooks of the deserted dancing halls, which have been closed up since

the great flood. And the habitants of the levee fear the dead with an unutterable fear.

“Look-a-hyar, old gal,” cried Banjo Jim to Mary Pearl, when the poor woman was dying in her dance-house on the Row,—“if you’s a-gwine to die, don’t you be a comin’ back hyar after you’s done dead, cos’ I’se a gwine ober the ribber—I is.” And when Mary died, Jim went over the river with several of the levee girls. For the dead may not pass over water, according to the faith of the roustabout; and to the haunted the steamboat offers a safe asylum from the haunters. But it is said that Mary came back notwithstanding, and comes back ever and anon on rainy nights, bringing with her the ghosts of many dead friends—Winnie, the pretty-faced little white girl who died at Pickett’s dance-house; and Horseheaded Em, the tall, wicked-eyed mulatto who drank herself to death; and Mattie Phillips, the young quadron who died at the Workhouse, folks say for want of morphine. There is a long, deep basement under the building where Mary kept house, with a great brick archway at the further end, behind which is a dark bedroom.

It happened one night not long after the old dance-house had changed hands, that a drunken levee girl wandered into that room to return, wholly sobered by terror, with a weird tale of how she had seen by the flickering light of a tallow-dip three dead women seated at a table—Mary Pearl, and Jane Goodrich and Horse-headed Em, and how Mary had “gobbled at her.” Since then no one dare sleep in that room alone. Maggie Sperlock, who lives there, can also tell you about a little woman who comes back sometimes to watch over her children—the waifs that Maggie named and adopted, Sis and Tom and Howard. Sis is never

whipped, for Maggie says that whenever the child is punished the dead mother will come in the night to haunt the chastiser. Sis is a pretty brown child, with big, dreamful eyes, and a strange habit of wandering in solitary places, whispering to herself or to Somebody invisible to all others—perhaps the frail, fond, dark mother, who came back silently in the night to protect her little one. Maggie has become afraid of the child's elfish ways, and vows that old Jot, the Obi-man, must have bewitched her. But all attempts, kindly or unkindly, to make the child speak of the viewless beings she held converse with, or of the spectral fancies that seemed to haunt her little brain, proved useless; the old foster-mother dared not whip her for fear of the Shadowy Woman whom she had seen one night bending over the sleeping child, as though to bestow a ghostly kiss; and Sis was finally sent to a kind relative in Bucktown, in the desperate hope of exorcising her.

While Sis was whispering to herself in shadowy places, and while that hideous story about dead Mary coming back to "gobble" at lonely people in the dark, was being discussed along the levee, folks began to remember that there had been an extraordinary mortality in the Row during the past twelve months. There was Dave Whitton, the tall, thin violin-player of Pickett's dance-house; and Uncle Dan Booker, the withered old "piker," who used to wander about the levee bent crescent-wise with age, and finally died in the Workhouse, serving out a sentence of vagrancy; and pretty Winnie, the little dance-house cook; and Mat. Phillips, the morphine-eater; and Horseheaded Em; and the supple quadroon, Dancing Sis; and clumsy Jane Goodrich; and poor Mary Pearl, who died vainly trying to whisper some awful confession to Judge Fox—all had departed from

the life of the Row in one brief year. Some said it must have been the great flood, which left its yellow slime and death dampness in the dance-houses, that had thus depopulated the Row. Some whispered that if one who could no longer cast a shadow in the moonlight had indeed returned to haunt the levee, other unwelcome people would surely follow to revisit their old friends and old resorts. Then folks began to talk about going over the river.

"Tain't no use a-sayin' dem tings am unpossible," gravely observed Judge Fox; "I b'lebes in de Bible, I does; an' I knows dar am folks roun' hyar a-talkin' to folks dat am done dead, an' a sinnin' awful sins agin de Lord." Perhaps the Judge was referring to old Jot.

At last, one stormy night—a night of black ragged clouds fleeing before the face of a gibbous moon—there came a spectral shock which paralyzed the Row with fright—Banjo Jim's story.

Since Pickett after the last foundation removed his establishment from No. 17 to his present location, the old dance-house has remained untenanted. By standing upon a chair or barrel one can obtain a good view of the interior through the narrow panes of dingy glass in the upper part of the door. It can then be perceived that the plaster has fallen away from the ceiling in great irregular patches; the bare walls still betray faintly verdant traces of the last flood; the door of the wooden partition in the rear lies unhinged upon the floor near a row of empty barrels; spiders monstrous enough to serve for the deadliest of Jot's Voodoo decoctions have spun vast webs in the dark corners; and a veil of pallid dust, thick enough to muffle the echo of a heavy foot-step, masks the planking of the dance-room. Now, for some



time previous to the occurrence which we are about to relate, Matt. Adams (who was born with a veil, they say), had been telling people that strange noises shook the old dance-house on rainy nights—the booming of a ghostly bass-viol, the heavy sound of dancers' feet, and the echo of strange laughter, "like the laughing of people long dead." "I listened at the door one night," said Matt., "and I heard them talking; I heard Dancing Sis and Dave Whitton, and they laughed in the dark, but I could not hear what they were saying." After the girl told that story, Banjo Jim seldom passed along the Row at night without a rabbit's foot in the breast pocket of his woolen shirt.

Whether he forgot the rabbit's foot on a certain Friday night, has not been recorded; but it is most likely that he did, for he had managed to get very drunk at Maggie Sperlock's, where the folks had been having a big dance. It was nearly two in the morning when the ball broke up, and Jim lingered last at the bar. When he went out, the gloomy Row and the silent steamboats at the wharf, and the great posts by the broken curb, seemed to reel about fantastically to the music of the last set—*Big Ball Up Town*. It was a hot, feverish night; the wild sky was thronged with the oddest clouds, moving in phantasmagorical procession before a warm breeze that seemed to blow from some volcanic land; and the horizon seemed to pulsate with lightning flashes. Jim listened for a friendly police whistle, the wanton laughter of a levee girl—even the footfall of a roustabout. But everything was silent as the silent boats; the voices of the levee were hushed; the windows were all dark.

"I b'leebe the Row am dead," muttered Jim. "I'll make

de ole gal talk all de same." He seized his banjo, and staggered along the broken sidewalk toward Pickett's, thrumming furiously to the negro melody:

"Ole Joe kickin' up ahind an' afore,  
An' a yaller gal a-kickin' up ahind ole Joe."

Suddenly he arrived at the broken steps opposite the deserted dance-house, tripped and fell headlong, his banjo clattering on the uneven pavement with a dying twang of musical reproach.

"Hell an' d—tion," observed Jim.

A burst of unearthly laughter followed the remark. Jim looked around him for the laughers, but saw nobody. He held his breath and listened. Sounds of negro merriment seemed to issue from the old dance-house—the "Kee-yah, kee-yah!" of roustabout laughter, the tramp of dancing feet, and the rapid melody of *The Arkansaw Traveler*, furiously played upon a shrieking violin. Jim was too drunk to observe just where he was; the levee seemed to have grown a mile long, and probably he thought himself at the new ballroom. He staggered to the door, and found it fast; he rapped, and none responded. Then he rolled an ash-barrel, filled with garbage and cinders, under the window, climbed upon it, and peered in.

The old hall was filled with a pale, sea-green light—such an unsteady radiance as illumines the path of a diver in deep water—a light that seemed to ripple up from the floor, along the walls, and against the shattered ceiling, though reflected by no visible flame. The room was filled with dancers, dancing wildly with goblin gestures, while upon the broken partition-door, placed across a row of empty barrels, stood the tall, thin figure of Dave Whitton, the dead

violin player, furiously fiddling *The Arkansaw Traveler*, his favorite air. And among the dancers Jim could recognize the familiar faces of many dead friends—Winnie and Dancing Sis, Em and Matt Phillips, and all the dead girls of the Row, with withered Dan Booker sitting in a corner, sleeping over his basket as in the old days.

They laughed and seemed to speak to one another, but Jim could not understand what was being said, whether that they spoke in some unknown tongue or that the noise of the music drowned the voices of the throng. He observed also that the thick layer of dust upon the floor remained undisturbed by the feet of the eerie crew, and that the figures of the dancers cast no shadows. Dave Whitton's eyes flamed with an elfish light, and a faint streak of pale fire seemed to follow each stroke of the fiddle bow.

Jim thinks that he had been watching the dance for an hour when the scene commenced slowly to assume a new character. The weird figure of the phantom fiddler grew taller and weirder; his violin lengthened and broadened until its tones deepened into a hoarse roar, and the phosphoric light which followed his bow shone brighter. Simultaneously the figures of the ghostly dancers lengthened and commenced to tower toward the ceiling. Then the musician ceased to play *The Arkansaw Traveler*; the dance continued to the goblin air of *The Devil Among the Tailors*. Jim began to fancy that the figures of the dancers were blurring and blending into one another, so rapidly did the phantoms elongate and twine about in the nightmare dance. He instinctively looked up at the musician to see whether he had grown to the roof. But that climax of ghastliness must have been reached while Jim was watching the nearest dancers. The long fiddler had not only grown

to the ceiling, but was actually growing *along the ceiling* toward the window over the door, bending horribly over the crowd below. The terrified roustabout involuntarily reckoned that at this frightful rate of growth the specter's head would touch the window-pane in about sixty seconds. He began to wonder whether the goblin would then commence to lengthen downward, and coil about the ballroom like an anaconda. The rippling light on the wall brightened from pale green to a livid corpse-light, and Jim felt that matters were approaching a crisis. From the moment he had peeped through the window some hideous fascination held him there; he lacked even the power to scream. He felt he could free himself by one audible yell of terror, but he could not even whisper; some ghastly influence had deprived him of motion and voice. Suddenly his ear caught the silvery sound of a patrolman's whistle on Lawrence street—the police Lieutenant was making his early round, and the spell was broken.

"Gorramighty!" gasped Jim in horror, when a flood of light burst over the levee—a sheet of white fire, followed by an abysmal crash.

. . . . .

Five minutes afterward two police officers found an apparently dead negro lying in the rain, opposite the old dance-house, together with an overturned ash-barrel and a broken banjo.

"That flash struck right near here," said Officer Brazil. "It's Banjo Jim; wonder if he got struck?"

Officer Knox bent over, opened the roustabout's woolen shirt, and laid his hand over the man's heart.

"Guess he must have got struck," observed Knox, with a satisfied expression of countenance.

"By lightning?" queried Patsy Brazil, stooping to make an observation.

"Lightning whisky," said Officer Knox.

Jim says otherwise, and the levee folks no longer lounge about the battered doors of No. 17 during the night hours.

## BUTTERFLY FANTASIES <sup>1</sup>

The cases of butterflies presented a spectacle of such uncommon beauty, that one is tempted to dwell upon the impression produced by a hurried examination of them. They [were] obtained in almost all parts of the world—from England and Great Britain, Africa and India, Australia and Southern America, and all portions of the United States. Under a strong light, the splendid wings of these beautiful insects fairly dazzle the eye with brilliancy of color. They [were] arranged partly according to their respective countries, and partly according to species, from the pale-winged English cabbage fly, to the gorgeous Indian insect whose wings are mottled with silky gray and black, like the bosom of a bird.

Surely there is nothing among the manifold marvels of Nature's subtle magic so indescribably lovely as those winged insects which bear upon their tiny pinions the kaleidoscopic hues of the flowers on which they feed. There is no possible shade of exquisite color, no blending of brilliant tints, no conceivable form of gauzy pinion that may not be studied in the fairy-winged butterflies and moths which inhabit the warmer belts of climate. The aerial grace and elfin beauty of these tiny creatures are frequently enhanced by something strangely suggestive of artistic design in shape and pattern—just as the mysterious chemistry

<sup>1</sup> A few lines introducing the description are omitted. They state that the insects were in the museum of F. W. Dury at Avondale, which Hearn visited.

of nature which forms the octagonal crystal or creates frosty dreams of summer woods upon a window-pane, incites one to futile fancies about Invisible Beings. The royal beauty of the humming-bird's rainbow-hued plumage, once used to form the state robes of Aztec Kings, is more than rivaled by the gorgeous coloring of the impalpable feathers of the butterfly. But this coloring is seldom devoid of a surprising regularity of pattern, and the wing that bears it is often cut by nature's cunning hand into the most graceful shapes that an artist could dream of. Arabesque design is often apparent in the wing of native butterflies; but more especially, perhaps, in those of the Orient. Their under wings are frequently scalloped out in the form of a section of a Moorish horse-shoe arch. Their microscopic plumage is often marked with the loveliest marbling imaginable. Porphyry, lapis-lazuli, Egyptian marble, red granite, veined white stone, and streaked pebble, are all wondrously imitated on the wings of these tiny beings; and the green flash of the emerald, the crimson light of the ruby, the violet gleam of the amethyst, are rivaled in the brilliancy of their elfish feathers. One huge Brazilian butterfly, which especially evoked our admiration, had great wings of lustrous azure, which deepened to a rich purple or paled to a clear sky-blue as the light refracted from them in various directions. Another seemed to have had its pinions cut from scarlet satin; another boasted a blending of blue with yellow, forming such a shining green as one views sometimes in summer sunsets. One had wings of satiny black, regularly veined with brilliant yellow streaks, between which were spots of yellow in fantastic form, like the letters of some magical language. Combinations of gold, with a gleam of green; of blue, with silvery

veins; of scarlet, with ermine white; of ebony black, with flaming yellow; of onyx color, with purple-edged dots of brown; of blood red, with bone-white—all these were repeated over and over again, in a myriad different patterns, upon the insect's wings. The colors were never flat or dead; they scintillated, shone, flashed. One curious butterfly, with wings slashed and scalloped like a mediæval doublet, had a blue eye painted at the corner of either under-wing. The eyes were almost perfect in design; the blue iris had a limpid clearness; the pupil was naturally traversed by a delicate gleam of light. It was painting—Nature painting with a brush of sunbeams, and the colors of ruby sunsets. Most of the delicate insects suggested beautiful things by their own beauty—the tints and honeyed hearts of myriad blossoms, the brilliancy of rosy clouds and infinitely azure skies, the flower-born fragrance that might be called the Ghost of Flowers, which lurks in the rustling folds of a fair lady's robes.

But sometimes, too, they suggested fancies of a far less pleasant kind, especially the giant moths, with gross bodies and heavy wings. There was the death's-head moth, that grim insect, dreaded by the English peasant, just as the praying mantis was feared by the sailors who first sailed the Spanish main. Its wings have the richness of costly funeral trappings; its back bears plainly painted, in the yellowish color of moldering bone, the hideous outlines of an eyeless and gibbering skull. To turn from this grotesque insect to the spiritually delicate butterflies of China and Japan was something of a relief. These were remarkable for the peculiarity of their coloring; many were blue or yellow—the favorite and sacred colors of China. One, a Japanese butterfly, bore upon its wings in scarlet and pale blue,



mingled with touches of white, an exact counterpart of a favorite sky-design on Japanese fans. It is no longer doubted that the nature of a race is molded by the nature of the climate of their land; that their arts and customs are strongly influenced by the conditions of their atmosphere; that their tastes are developed in accordance with the peculiarities of their natural surroundings. And may it not be that the same Influence which taught the Chinaman to paint his sacred dragon yellow; that taught the Japanese fan-painter to paint impossible skies; that caused the Oriental to bring the Saracenic arch to its highest perfection in the ancient cities of India,—also colored the yellow wings of the Chinese butterfly, limned fairy skies upon the wings of the Japanese insect, and cut the pinions of the Indian moth into graceful arabesques?

## FROST FANCIES

During the intense cold of the past forty-eight hours, the great panes of large plate-glass windows throughout the city presented scenes of such beauty as the artistic Spirit of the Frost seldom favors us with. The crystallizations were frequently on a gigantic scale—in likeness of such arabesque vegetation, although colorless, as somehow awakened fancies of strange fretwork about the moresque arches of the crystal palaces described in the *Arabian Nights*. Sometimes they presented such a combination of variedly intricate patterns, as to suggest a possible source for the fantastic scroll-work designs employed by the monkish masters of mediæval illumination in the decoration of their famous missals and manuscripts. There were double volutes of sharp-edged leaf design, such as occasionally formed a design for elegant vase handles with the antique proficients in the ceramic art; damascene patterns, broken by irregular markings like Cufic characters on a scimitar-blade; feathery interweavings of inimitable delicacy, such as might form elfin plumage for the wings of a frost-spirit; spectral mosses, surpassing in their ephemeral beauty the most velvety growths of our vegetable world; ghost ferns, whose loveliness attracts the eye, but fades into airy nothingness under the breath of the admirer; evanescent shrubs of some fairy species, undreamt of in our botanical science; and snowy plumes, fit to grace the helmet of a phantom-knight, shaming the richest art of devisers in rare heraldic emblems. At moments the December sun intensified the brilliancy of these coruscations of frost-fire: lance-rays of solar flame,

shivered into myriad sparkles against the glittering mail of interwoven crystals, tinged all the scintillating work with a fairy-faint reflection of such iridescence as flames upon a humming bird's bosom. The splendor of the frost-work was yesterday everywhere a matter of curious comment, and such a variety of pattern—often of a peculiarly “large-leaved” design—has not been seen for years in the city. On [one] street, was a very beautiful and peculiar specimen of crystallization in a shop window. It presented the aspect of narrow-bladed wild grasses, thickly growing, and luxuriant; stems shot up bare to a certain height, when leaves sprouted from them on either side, bending suddenly downward at a sharp angle shortly after leaving the stem, in exquisite rivalry of nature. But at a certain height the pattern lost distinctness, and blended into a sharply bristling wilderness of grass-blades, so that the general effect, like that of a rough etching, was best observable at a short distance. The unearthly artist who created the scene, however, was not content with rivaling nature, for his wild grasses terminated beautifully but weirdly in a wild fantasy of leaf scrolls, which resembled nothing in the world of green things growing.

## STEEPLE CLIMBERS

Joseph Roderiguez Weston, the daring steeple climber, who recently affixed the green wreaths and tri-colored banner to the cross of the Cathedral spire, called at the *Commercial* office a few days ago and expressed the desire that a reporter should accompany him on his next trip to the giddy summit, when he should remove the temporary decorations there placed in honor of the Archbishop's Golden Jubilee. Such a proposition could not well be accepted without considerable hesitancy—a hesitancy partly consequent upon the consciousness of personal risk, and partly owing to the probable nature of the public verdict upon such undertakings. The novel and rare experiences of such a trip, coupled with the knowledge that a correct description of them could not fail to elicit some public interest, and that the hardy enterprise of the professional climbers themselves could only be done justice to by temporarily sharing their dangers, ultimately proved sufficient inducements to a *Commercial* reporter to attempt the experiment. The ascent was fixed for 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon, at which time Mr. Weston, accompanied by John Klein, of the Globe Slating Company, who is no less daring a climber than his experienced comrade, called at the office with a buggy for a representative of the *Commercial*. Each of the party had previously prepared for the event by changing their ordinary dress for a worn-out suit. Mr. Peter Depretz, also of the firm of John Klein & Co., awaited us at the Cathedral with all the necessary climbing apparatus,—ropes, grappling-ladders, block and tackle, etc.

It is scarcely necessary to observe that the writer, wholly inexperienced in the art of hazardous climbing, did not start out upon such an undertaking without considerable trepidation, notwithstanding the reiterated assurances of his guide that nothing was to be feared in view of the secure arrangements and first-class apparatus; and when we drove under the Cathedral spire itself, towering symmetrically against the clear blue, pillar piled on pillar, and cornice succeeding cornice, up to the last long, bare peak of white stone, it was impossible to quell a little fluttering of the heart. The lightning-rod appeared like a tiny black line, slender as a spider's thread; the lofty flag, floating in the afternoon breeze, seemed from below no larger than a kerchief of colored silk; and the great stone cross itself, wreathed with evergreens, looked far too small to afford foothold on its summit for any human being. The fantastic and shadowy interior of the spire itself was calculated to increase rather than to lighten the novice's weight of anxiety. With the doors of the Cathedral closed, we groped our way up the winding stairs of stone in ebon darkness, passing above the choir, through an iron door, which slides portcullis fashion, and whereof the purpose is to cut off connection between the spire and the main building in case of a conflagration. Here the spiral stairway of stone ceased, and a gas jet being lighted, revealed a seemingly interminable series of octagonal stone chambers above, rising above one another in lessening perspective, separated only by floors of open beam or plank work, and lighted, far up, by a dim gray light struggling through louver windows. The cold, bare walls of rough stone seemed to sweat a chilly sweat under the gas-light, which revealed clinging to them growths of those tiny fungi which thrive even in darkness.

The walls at this point are eight feet in thickness, massive as those of a feudal donjon-keep; and flights of grimy wooden stairs, narrow and often unsteady, creep in a long-drawn-out spiral around the interior. Looking down from the balustrade an abyss of gloom alone is visible; the beams of the stair-structure are thickened on their upper surface with inches of colorless dust; the panels of the iron door are edged on the lower groove with a deep layer of detached rust; the wooden steps creak and shriek as the foot falls on them; and far up above, in the deep darkness, the solemn pulsations of the great clock's iron heart is weirdly audible, monotonously awful, as the footfall of Something coming up the stairs of a haunted house. "I have heard the beating of that clock," said the steeple-climber, "on wild, wintry nights, when I had to go aloft to fix something and the goblin sound almost frightened me. It sounds gruesome in the dark."

Again and again gas jets were lighted and stairs climbed, until the light of day struggled faintly in upon us, the beating of the clock grew louder, and the great weights became visible, floating and swaying above. The tower now narrowed, and we crawled rather than climbed among beams, through holes, and into the heart of the clock itself, like animalculæ creeping amid the machinery of an old-fashioned chronometer, until we stood among the bells. Thence we watched in the gray dimness the life-springs of the huge time-keeper working and shuddering. The bells were rusty; their tongues were rough with red decay. Suddenly the chimes boomed out around us; an iron arm arose in the gloom and smote the great bell twice; it was half-past 4 o'clock.

We crawled up between the lips of the bells to another

and again another wooden stair and stood one hundred and fifty feet above the pavement, in an octagonal chamber, lighted by eight louver windows. From one of these, on the eastern side, had been removed the huge wooden lattice which at once serves to keep out foul weather, and to throw down the sound of church bells into the bosom of the city. And from below struggled faintly to our ears the distant din of traffic, the rumble of wagons, the hoof-beats of horses and the buzz of the City Buildings. Spires and cornices seemed to rise almost under our feet; the river's silver flickered from the south, and the yellow canal crawled beneath its bridges away to the rolling purple of the hills in the north.

"Must we climb out through this window?" was our first nervous interrogation.

"Oh, yes," replied Watson, "it can't be done any other way."

Above projected a huge cornice, below was nothing but a sheer precipice of smooth stone. The writer saw and trembled, and inwardly wished himself at home; and when Peter Depretz got out of the window to execute a dance on the narrow cornice underneath for the purpose of inspiring us with courage, the fear only increased. Then a young man clambered up to a loophole within, Klein fastened the steel hooks of a grappling ladder to the cornice, which projected twenty-five feet above us, and the top rung of the vibrating stairway was made fast to a rope, which the young assistant tied firmly about a beam within. But the ladder swung backward and forward over the precipice, until we began to experience the familiar feeling of nightmare.

After having read that hideous but most artistically Gothic romance by Victor Hugo, *The Dwarf of Notre Dame*, one is apt to have a frightful nightmare about

steeple-climbing, and we remember such unpleasant experience. The dreamer finds himself, perhaps, straddling a stone dragon at a vast altitude from the gabled city below; the clouds float far beneath him; the ravens shriek in his ears; above him springs into the very vault of heaven a vast peak of carved stone—a precipice roughened only with gargoyles, griffins, hippogriffs, dragons—all the hideous imaginations of the mediæval sculptors. He flees from a pursuing monster below, and climbs the dizzy eminence above with frantic despair. The diabolic pursuer pauses, to grin with satiated rage at his victim's agony of fear. Suddenly the gargoyles grin; the stony monsters open their giant mouths; the vast steeple trembles with awful animation; the gargoyle seizes the fugitive's heel with his teeth. The victim shrieks and falls into the abyss of peaked roof below, bounding from carved projections, wheeling, turning, circling, ricocheting in the ghastly fall. There is no more intense fear than this fear of falling in nightmare, and the spectacle of the swaying ladder without the Cathedral steeple yesterday produced a wide-awake realization of that horrible fancy.

“Take a good drink of whisky,” observed Weston, proffering a well filled flask; “it will give you nerve without producing giddiness, since you seem frightened.”

Then Weston produced a thick leathern strap, and buckled it tightly about the reporter's waist, also fastening a strong harness strap under and over his right thigh. To these straps the end of a new rope was made fast, and one other end passed up the ladder to the loophole window, twenty-five feet above, where it was taken in and tied to a beam. Klein then ran up the ladder, which shuddered under him as though trying to shake him off and down on the



stone steps of the façade below, and Weston endeavored to induce the reporter to follow. The latter was by that time in a shivering fit and on the point of backing down, when Depretz seized him by the thigh and pulled him outward, with a gruff "Confound you, come out or I'll pull you out!" Then he came out and went up the quivering ladder, feeling all the while as though the steeple were reeling.

On arriving at the cornice above, a strong rope stretched through the loophole window afforded an excellent hand-rail, when the ladder was pulled up, made fast to another cornice above, and the climbing operation repeated for another twenty-five feet. We then found ourselves perched on the narrow cornice at the base of the tall, bare peak, whence the flag was flying fifty feet further up. It may be worth while to mention here that all the party had encased their feet in India-rubber, which clings well to roughened stone, and facilitates the work of climbing. The ladder was left hanging to the cornice by its iron teeth for the descent.

Weston then clambered up the slope of the spire with the agility of a monkey, planting his feet against the stone and ascending the lightning-rod hand over hand. Arrived at the summit, he bestrode the cross, lowered a third rope, with which he hauled up a block-and-tackle and a larger rope, and made preparations for our ascent. The block-and-tackle was firmly bound over the arms of the cross, the large rope riven through it and fastened below around the reporter's chest, while the lighter rope was tied to the leathern belt about his loins, to serve as a stay-rope in case of accident. Then seizing the lightning-rod the work of ascent was rendered comparatively easy. Just below the cross there is a little cornice which affords a temporary foot-

hold, and thence it was not difficult, with the aid of the lightning-rod, to climb into the arms of the cross, when the novice was tied to the lightning-rod itself. The northern arm of the cross served admirably for a footstool and the summit for a seat. It is cut octagonally, with facets upon the summit, converging cut-diamond style to a little point. The summit of the cross has a surface equivalent to about two feet square.

Fear gradually passed off while thus seated, and it was possible to turn and look in any direction over the city. From the great height, two hundred and twenty-five feet, every portion of the city encircled by the hills was distinctly visible. The City Buildings and the surrounding edifices seemed dwarfed to toy-houses; the circular fountain-basin of the City Park seemed like a ring of muddy water at the foot of the Cathedral; the summits of the Synagogue's minarets were visible below; in every direction the city lay out in regular squares like an elaborate map. For three or four blocks, north, south, east and west, the centers of thoroughfares were distinctly visible, with wagon-teams, buggies and carriages straggling along, apparently no larger than flies. The crowds below, with faces upturned to the cross, were liliputians; even with a small opera glass it was difficult to distinguish faces. All the Plum street canal bridges from the elbow eastward, were plainly visible; Mill Creek shimmered with a golden gleam in the west, and the Ohio curved in blue serpentine in the south. We seemed to stand above the city smoke and the evening mists; sounds from below came faintly to the ear, like echoes of another world; the tone of the giant clock below striking the chimes and the hour of five, were weird and thin; the least whisper was audible; the sky seemed nearer, and the ripple of

fleecy clouds, coming up from the west, in white breaker lines against the sea of azure, seemed purer and clearer than ordinary. From our eminence it was impossible to obtain, by looking down, any accurate idea of the prodigious height—the foreshortening of the spire, to the last cornice we had left, gave it the appearance of being but ten or twelve feet high.

“Suppose,” we horrifically observed, “that the cross should give way, and fall down!”

“See!” replied Weston, giving the summit a violent shake with both hands—“she rocks!”

It was true; the cross trembled and shuddered an instant, and then gave four distinct rocks—earthquake tremblings they seemed to us. Another shake caused it to rock still more violently, and shook us in our seats.

“For God’s sake,” we frantically yelled, “stop!”

“It’s perfectly safe,” observed Weston, apologetically. “I rocked it just to show you that it was safe. If it didn’t rock it would be out of plumb. All properly built stone spires rock, and wooden spires rock horribly.”

“Suppose,” we again suggested, “that the steeple should take fire below us!”

“Then I should run down the lightning rod and carry you on my back.”

“Besides,” observed Klein, “the steeple is as solid as the everlasting hills. The fire might burn out the wooden shell within, but the heat would escape through the windows, and we could get to the windward side of the cross, you know.”

The flags and wreaths were carefully detached, and the copper-barbed top of the lightning rod, which had been removed for the decorations, was replaced in its socket. Then

Weston took a small flag and threw it down. It was awful to watch its descent. It flew and flew in circles, described somersaults, trembled, collapsed, extended, and finally, after many seconds, flattened out on the roof.

"I want you to stand up on the top of the cross, right on the top," exclaimed Weston, commencing to detach the cords which held the reporter to the lightning-rod. His indifference to danger inspired the visitor with sufficient confidence to perform the feat, and extend his arms for an instant 225 feet above *terra firma*. Suddenly the reporter caught sight of something that caused him to clutch the lightning-rod convulsively and sit down. Weston's braces were adorned with great brazen buckles, which bore in ghastly bas-relief the outlines of a skull and crossbones.

"What on earth do you wear such ill-omened things for?" we asked.

"Oh," replied he, laughing and dancing on the northern arm of the cross, "I thought I'd get smashed up some day, and took a fancy to these suspenders, as they serve to remind me of my probable fate. You seem to believe in omens. Well, I tell you I never like to do climbing on Friday, although I know it's all foolishness."

After inspecting the initials of the climbers cut into the summit of the cross, we performed a descent which seemed far easier than the ascent. As we re-entered the belfry the clock boomed out six times, and the "Angelus" chimed in measured strokes of deeply vibrating music from the big bell. The mists climbed higher as the sun commenced to sink in a glory of mingled gold and purple, and a long streamer of ruby light flamed over the western hills. "That is a lovely view," exclaimed Weston, "but I think it is not

so fine as the bird's eye view of the city by night, sparkling with ten thousand lights. You must come up on the cross some fine night with me."

The reporter shivered and departed.

## A ROMANTIC EPISODE AT THE MUSIC CLUB

The novel spectacle of three young journalists walking the streets yesterday afternoon under a blazing sun, each in familiar converse with a Chinaman, created some curiosity. People who knew the young journalists turned shortly round, and stared aghast. The odd party of six accepted the situation with becoming smiles of satisfaction. Each of the Mongolians bore a fantastic musical instrument, and their costumes were characterized by an aspect of neatness which intimated that they had been donned for some special occasion. The occasion was certainly an interesting one. It was an episode in the history of Cincinnati Romanticism.

Mr. H. Edward Krehbiel, of the *Gazette*, has for several years devoted himself to the study of Oriental music and the chants of the ancient peoples of the East. There are few studies, indeed, so profoundly interesting as that of the early history of music; none certainly that offers a wider field of legend to the gleaner of curious traditions. Mr. Krehbiel found the work of research in this direction as fascinating as it was novel, and succeeded in making a very remarkable collection of beautiful melodies—Hebrew, Indian and Chinese—fragments of chants, heard doubtless in the Temple of Solomon, and as old, perchance, as the period of bondage in Egypt; tunes played upon sackbuts and shawms before the Babylonian captivity; Vedic hymns ancient as the castes of India; hymns to Krishna and Mahadeva, to Siva and the dark Venus born from a lotus-flower on the Ganges; songs sung by the Parsees to the rising sun,

and by the serpent-charmers to their hooded cobras; and music known in all the cities of the Chinese Empire, ere yet had been heard that strange song Apollo sang—

“When Ilion, like a mist, rose into towers.”

And in these romantic researches, the journalistic friends of the researcher felt no small interest.

Then it came to pass, in the course of preparing a series of essays upon these curious melodies of the East, that Krehbiel conceived the romantic idea of having the music of Cathay actually performed for him upon the *San-heen* and the *Yah-hin*, and other instruments of the most eastern East, not by musicians of the Aryan race, but even, in sooth, by men whose skins were of the color of gold, and who had dwelt beneath the shadow of the Chinese Wall. And he spoke concerning his desire to us and to others imbued with the spirit of Romanticism.

In the course of a prolonged experience in news-seeking about Magistrates' offices, we remembered having beheld various Chinese instruments of outlandish shape that had been temporarily levied on by a remorseless Constable. There was among them a *San-heen*, or banjo, of the Celestial Empire, covered, like the abysmally bass drums of the Aztec priests, with the scaly skin of a serpent. There was also a *Yah-hin*, or shrieking fiddle, immemorially old. And there was likewise a thing called in English a “moon-guitar,” but in Chinese called by a name unpronounceable, and impossible to spell with confidence. It might be *Yah-hwang*. All these, we recollected, were the goods and chattels of the laundryman, Char Lee; and we found the little Chinese laundry, and its owner. The atmosphere was dense and somniferous with the vapor of opium, which arose from the

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pipes of the drowsy laundrymen. They were lying side by side upon a wooden table, and a small lamp burned dimly between them. Char Lee spoke a word of greeting, but the other only half-raised his opium-heavy eyes, and continued to draw upon his pipe-stem until the yellow gum cracked upon the bowl with an agony of spluttering crepitation.

We induced Char Lee to take down his *san-heen*, upon whose hollow body the amber-colored scales of serpent-skin shone like inlaid work of barbaric design. And that we might be charmed with its quality of tone, he played cunningly upon it, playing after the classic fashion of the Ancients with a small ivory plectrum. Then the *san-heen* wailed a strange wail, and spoke a foreign sorrow, and awakened in us fancies of a heart longing after the sight of pagoda-towers and of tea gardens; of the serrated sails of sluggish junks, and the eternal mourning of the Yang-tse-King.

“Char Lee,” spoke the Musician, “do you know a little Chinese song like this.” And he sang slowly the most ancient melody of *Muhli-wha*, or *The Jasmine Flower*, which may be found in Williams’ *Middle Kingdom*.

The opium-smoker, hitherto so listless, suddenly laid his heavy pipe down, and arose to a sitting posture. He commenced to nod his head approvingly in time to the music, and at last burst out into the song in a shrill falsetto voice. Both of the Chinese had suddenly become interested to the degree of delight, as their smiling faces bore witness; and the contrasts of the scene were certainly picturesque. On the one hand the handsome young Aryan, flushed with the triumph of his art, which had triumphed over the natural



and ancient want of sympathy between Mongolian and Caucasian; on the other hand, those yellow-skinned, feminine-featured strangers in a strange land, welcoming an echo of music from their own with an intensity of pleasure that seemed almost abnormal in beings so phlegmatic. And he sang the solemn strain that is still sung with the sacred instruments in the pagodas just as it was sung three thousand years ago. They knew it, also, and their faces became grave as the chant itself.

It was then that Char Lee promised to visit the Musical Club yesterday, and to bring with him other Chinese musicians, who should perform the music of Cathay upon instruments imported from the Flowery Land. This is the story of the procession previously mentioned.

On arriving at the Club rooms the Chinese were comfortably seated, and the members of the Club curiously inspected their instruments. Programmes handsomely printed on yellow paper, were distributed by Krehbiel among the audience, and thereon were Chinese musical characters, Chinese songs with words and music, and extracts from Chinese history and from the sayings of Confucius, illustrative of the philosophy of Chinese music.

It was an artistic idea, this of printing the programmes on *yellow* paper. For Yellow is the sacred color among the Chinese. Was not the color of the primordial earth yellow? And is not the principle of Force, the physical basis of life, the protoplasm of the universe, termed yellow according to Chinese natural philosophy? And has not the fundamental tone of music been called from immemorial age in China by the name of Yellow Bell. Thus looking upon our programme we thought of yellow things innumerable;

yellow tea roses and pretty yellow women; yellow robes and the yellow caps of mandarins; yellow-painted pagodas and the Imperial yellow of the Chinese Emperors; yellow silks and the yellow newspapers established before the empires of Europe; the yellow helmets of the Chinese cavalry and the standard of the Yellow Dragon; and the Yellow River that forever winds dragon-wise to the shores of the Yellow Sea.

No audience could have been more interestedly attentive to a lecture than was that little audience at the Musical Club-rooms to the lecture of Krehbiel on the history and characters of Chinese music; and the effort, though in great part *extempore*, was well worthy of the audience. The speaker had evidently acquired a vast deal of very curious information upon his theme—information of a character unfamiliar even to his musical audience, and every sentence of his address contained something new and odd. He described the peculiarities of the Chinese scales, drew their musical characters, explained the significance of their names—*Kung, Tschang, Kio, Tsche, Yu*—and drew especial attention to the elision of the fourth and seventh notes of our own scale in that of the Chinese. Then he spoke of the history of their music, dating back into the twilight of fable; its myths and its curious facts. Particularly interesting was his treatment of the subject of the Chinese philosophy of music,—the most beautiful and extensive musical philosophy possessed, perhaps, by any people,—as compared with their practical ideas of music. He spoke of that Chinese lute, which, it is said, none but the virtuous and pure in heart can teach to utter music, and of the sacred instruments in the temples, the musical stones, and the wooden tiger with the musical entrails; the seventeen varie-

ties of drums, the thunder-creating gong, and the harp of fifty strings.

It was not our intention to quote largely from the store of information contained in Krehbiel's lecture, as it is but one of a series of equally interesting essays on Oriental music, which are not public property; but the legend of the origin of the Chinese musical scale is beautiful enough to demand some brief attention in our own words.

Nearly five thousand years ago, Hoang-ti rose up against the Emperor Tsche-yeu, and smote him and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

Hoang-ti loved men who spoke words of wisdom, the sages and the thinkers; and he set them as teachers over the people, and gave them high places in his kingdom.

Also, he loved music,—the sound of gongs and of drums; of fiddlers fiddling upon their fiddles, and of harpers harping upon their harps.

And he commanded the wise Ling-lun to proceed through the land, and give laws of music to men, and preserve the purity of music lest the people should be corrupted.

So Ling-lun betook himself to the uttermost parts of the kingdom—to the land Si-yung—to the birthplace of the Hoang-ho, and he heard the eternal murmur of the Yellow River.

He cut with his knife a bamboo that grew by the river, and blowing into it, he fashioned with his breath a sound.

And the sound was as the sound of a deep voice and sad—the voice of the Yellow River—the Voice of the Hoang-ho.

Then heard he likewise the songs of the wonder-birds, Fung-hoang, the singing birds of good omen.

Fung, the male bird, sang in six tones; Hoang, the female bird, answered unto him with six other notes.

And listening, he knew that but one of the twelve sounds was as the sound of his own voice and as the sound of the river's murmur.

Then he called the lowest tone of the bird Fung, being the same as the tone of the voice of the river, *Kung*; and cutting twelve bamboos of divers lengths, he created in them with his breath all the tones of the voices of the birds Fung-Hoang.

And founding all his tones upon the primal note *Kung*, he made to himself a just law of music, imitating the perfect tones of the male bird and the imperfect notes of the female.

[And it would seem as though the imperfection in the Chinese Scale, the absence of our fourth and seventh note, are due to the fact that the birds Fung-Hoang could not or would not produce them.—*Timid Criticism.*]

After the essay the three Chinamen played their unspeakably ancient music upon their *Yah-whang*, *Yah-hin*, and *San-heen*; at first one by one, and then all together. There was an odd spirit of melody discernible in their playing which faintly recalled suggestions of Highland airs hummed and shrilled forth upon Highland bag-pipes. When all played together, however, the melody was difficult of discernment, and the fiddle shrieked as though the ghost of the cat who had furnished the strings still haunted the inside of the instrument. Most of the airs were sad; they suggested sorrow—a sorrow as of the resignation of a great people hopelessly oppressed. But the tone of the music seemed ancient as the voice of running water; its utterances seemed the utterances of a thought dead before the Deluge; its weird melancholy evoked the fancy of some great national woe befallen in an age of Antiquity too vastly remote even for learned research to spin fine theories upon. And

suddenly there came to us the opium fancy of De Quincey—  
 “*A young Chinese seems to me an antediluvian man re-  
 newed.*”

When the players with the golden-colored skins had ceased to play, however, we had at Krehbiel’s request a wonderful modern interpretation of Chinese music, the spirit of *Lien-ye-Kin*, as felt by the composer, Von Weber, and as interpreted by Mr. Schneider at the Musical Club. Weber had introduced the ancient melody into his overture to *Turan dot*, but he lent to it his thunders of harmony and wonderful variation of feeling.

And then, indeed, we felt the Soul of Chinese Music; the mysterious saying of the Chinese Sages, unexplainable by the *Yah-hin* or *San-heen*, because clear as the light of noon with the mighty explanation of the composer.

It was the thought of the Child expressed by the sympathetic lips of the Man; it was the fancy of the dumb outspoken by the lips of the comprehending eloquent. The instrument was strained to its full power of utterance, and it uttered in varying tones a tune as ancient, perhaps, as the Aryan emigration from the shadow of the Himalayas, but sweet and simple as many of our favorite Old-country airs, and blended with harmonies rich and deep as the deepest-toned minster-bells. The Chinese heard it. They recognized only the melody; the harmony was lost upon them, even as the melody was half lost upon us, until it found an Aryan interpreter. **But they gathered around the piano, and with shrill falsetto voices sang the song, *Lien-ye-Kin*.**

# SOME PICTURES OF POVERTY

## IMPRESSIONS OF A ROUND WITH AN OVERSEER OF THE POOR

“That shattered roof, and this naked floor;  
A table, a broken chair;  
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank  
For sometimes falling there.”

West Seventh, Nos. 206, 208 and 210, and the mysterious buildings in the rear, running back to the alley, is a locality of such picturesque wretchedness as, perhaps, may not be found elsewhere within the city limits,—not even in the labyrinthine hollows of the famous negro quarter in the East End. Narrow hallways, from whose irregular sides the plaster has fallen away in shapeless patches, lead through the frame cottages, fronting on Seventh street, into a species of double court-yard in the rear, whose northern end is bounded by a block of three-story frames, usually termed the Barracks, and inhabited by the poorest of the poor. Within the court itself is situated one of the strangest, most irregular, and most outlandish wooden edifices possible to imagine. It might have been a country farmhouse in days before the city had crept up north and west from the river; but now inclosed in the heart of a block, its dingy colorlessness and warped deformity suggest a mediæval rather than a modern haunt of poverty—one of those tottering hovels which crowd humbly and beseechingly about the elder Cathedrals of the old world, like so many Miseries seeking refuge under the shadow of a great Faith.

The good planks have warped and bent with age, the building has shrunken and shriveled up paralytically. All its joints are rheumatic, all its features haggard and wretched. It seems to have once undulated throughout its whole gaunt length, as though the solid soil had surged under it in the groundswell of some forgotten earthquake. There is probably no true right angle in its whole composition. The angles of its windows and doors all present extraordinary obliqueness or acuteness, as in the outlines of a child's first attempt to draw a house; and no child ever drew plans more seemingly impossible and out of plumb than the withered front of this building. Molded by the irresistible pressure of the contracting walls, the narrow stairways have been squeezed up at one side, and down on the other, while the feet of dead generations of poor and children of the poor have worn deep hollows in every step. The floors slope like the cabins of vessels riding over a long swell; and one marvels how objects of furniture maintain an upright attitude in the tottering house. Part of the crooked basement appears to have sunk into the ground, as the newer pavement of the courtyard rises nearly two feet above the level of the lower floors. The northern end of this floor has ceased to be inhabitable; the southern end has its dwellers, ancient poor, who dwell with memories and their dead.

Here the Overseer is a frequent and welcome visitor, and here commenced a round of observation at once painful and picturesque. The little rickety door opened into a room small and dark; the plasterless ceiling might easily be touched with the hand, and, excepting the deep gray square of light afforded by one tiny window, the gloom was illumined only by one spot of crimson light which is-

sued from the jaws of a shattered stove, throwing out a broad ray of red across the heavy smoke which floated through the dark.

There was the voice of a child crying in the darkness; and the voices of an aged negro couple, seated on either side of that wavering line of ruddy light across the smoke, came huskily in greeting to the visitor's ears. The husband had beheld his eightieth year and the smiles of his children's children; the wife's years were scarcely fewer. Age had brought with it the helplessness of weakness, and the silent resignation which best befits both. They spoke a little to us of a Virginian plantation, where each had first known the other sixty years ago; of the old master who had given them manumission, and of little memories kindled into life by some kindly questions. We could not see their faces in the night on either side of the thin stream of red light, but their voices, speaking to us through the dimness and the smoke, bore something of a sad poetry with them—the poetry of two lives meeting in the summer and sunlight of strong youth, and knowing little knowledge save that of the tie which bound each to the other faster and firmer, as the summer and sunshine faded out, and the great Shadow, which is the End, approached to draw them nearer to each other in the darkness.

. . . There was light up stairs in a tiny crooked room, which the Overseer entered after cautious gropings along a creaking corridor whose floor had been eaten through in unexpected places by hungry pauper rats. The room—lighted partly by a flaring candle, with "winding-sheet" drippings, and partly by some thin, yellow flames, which wrestled weakly together within a ruined monkey-stove for the possession of a fresh lump of fuel—had an east-



ward slope; the old whitewash upon the walls had turned to the hue of strong tallow; a quantity of coal had been piled up into one corner within a foot of the greasy ceiling, and long articles of worn-out raiment, hung about the chamber, seemed to maintain in their tattered outlines a certain goblin mockery of withered bodies they might have clothed. Beside the fire sat two women. In the rounded outline of one figure, draped thinly in neat garments, spoke the presence of youth and comeliness; but the face was hooded in shadow and veiled with a veil. The other face stood out in strong relief under the mingled light from the coal fire and candle flame. It was the face of an aged woman, with ashen hair,—a face sharply profiled, with a wreck of great beauty in its outlines, that strong beauty of wild races which leaves the faces of the aged keenly aquiline when the forms of youth have withered away.

“This old lady,” observed the Overseer, smiling, “is upwards of seventy-two years of age. She has the blood of the Indian races in her veins, and is quite proud of it, too.”

The outlines of the thin, fine face, with its penetrating eyes, bore a shadowy testimony to the speaker’s words, against the fact that such a story has not unfrequently been offered to conceal the source of a yet darker tinge in the veins. All her kin were dead and lost to her; but there were poor friends to aid her, and the city, also, bestowed its charity. Many held her wise in weird ways, and sought her counsel against unforeseen straits; and many also, like the silent visitor at her side, loved the pleasure of converse with her, and talks of the old days. Speaking pleasantly of her earlier years, with that picturesque minuteness of detail natural to minds which live most strongly

in memories, the aged woman said that as she grew older, the remembrances of childhood seemed to grow clearer to her. "For within the last few years," said the good lady, "I can remember the face of my mother, who died when I was a child."

And there was something so sadly pathetic in this memory of seventy years—this sudden rekindling of a forgotten recollection in the mind of that gray woman, sitting alone, with shadows and shadowy thoughts—that the writer could not but ask:

"Can you describe that recollection to me?"

"I remember her face," slowly came the answer, "only as the face of a beautiful dead woman, with closed eyelids, and long hair, all dark, and flowing back darkly against a white pillow. And I remember this only because of a stronger memory. I remember a hired girl, seated on a little plank bridge lying across a shallow branch of water. She was washing a white cap and a long white dress. Some one asked her who was dead, pointing to the white things; and when she answered, I knew it was my mother."

. . . Passing from corridor to corridor, and room to room, throughout the buildings on the Groesbeck property, the actual novelty of the experience soon gave place to consciousness of the fact that poverty in Cincinnati is not only marked by precisely the same features characteristic of pauperism in the metropolitan cities, but that its habits and haunts, its garments and furniture, its want and suffering, even the localities wherein it settles, are stamped by a certain recognizable uniformity even here. So strikingly similar were the conditions of tenants in the Groesbeck property, that a description of one apartment would suffice for a dozen; and having passed through many rooms, the

recollections of each were so blended together in the mind, by reason of their general resemblance, that only by the aid of some peculiarly painful or eccentric incident could the memory of any one be perfectly disentangled from the mass of impressions. The same rickety room, the same cracked stove, the same dingy walls bearing fantastic tapestry of faded rags and grotesque shadow-silhouettes of sharp profiles; the same pile of city coal in one corner, the same ghastly candle stuck in the same mineral water bottle, and decorated with a winding sheet; the same small, unmade bed and battered cupboard at its foot; the same heavily warm atmosphere and oppressive smell, seemed to greet the visitor everywhere. Even the faces of the aged women gradually impressed one as having nearly all been molded according to one pattern. As the circle of observation widened, however, these resemblances commenced to diverge in various directions; forcing the observer to recognize strongly marked lines between certain classes of city poor. Aged Irish people who need city charity, form, for example, a class by themselves, and rather a large one. They are usually far better housed and more comfortably situated in regard to furniture and household necessaries than are the poorest colored people.

These characteristics and classes began to make themselves manifest ere the Overseer had made his last call in the Seventh street barracks, among some good old women telling their beads, who called down benedictions upon him in their native Erse. Afterward the definition of these features of poverty became clearer and clearer, especially during the last round of visits in the East End.

. . . The Overseer said that there used to be a very wonderful negro woman in the Groesbeck buildings, who

was said to be a hundred and seventeen years old, and had been brought to the States from Africa by a slave-trader while a vigorous young woman, so that she remembered many interesting things—the tropical trees and strange animals, the hive-shaped huts of her people, the roar of lions in the night, the customs of the tribe, and some fragments of their wild tongue. But we could not find her; and subsequently learned with dismay that she was accustomed to speak of Washington. Then after a brief round of calls in the frames east of Vicker's Church, which left with us visions of other ancient women with sharp faces and of a young mother with two infants lying upon the framework of a broken bedstead, without mattresses or blankets, we visited a tottering framework on East Eighth street, not far from Crippen alley. Its interior presented no novel aspect of decaying wood and fallen plaster and crooked stairs; but one peaked and withered face which peered out upon us from behind a candle, tremblingly held at a creaking door, wore a look so woe-begone that for days afterward it haunted the memory like a ghost.

Within the piteous room, by the yellow light of a dip candle, the face seemed to force its misery upon observation involuntarily yet irresistibly. There were shadows about the eyes and long lines about the mouth which betrayed a torpor of hope, a life frozen into apathy by the chill of long-protracted disappointment. She looked at the visitor with a sort of ghastly tremor, like one so accustomed to an atmosphere of wretchedness that the pressure of a cheerful being becomes an actual infliction by contrast.

"How's the old man?" quoth the Overseer, pleasantly.

She shrugged her bony shoulders wearily, and replied in a husky voice, bitter as a winter wind, that he had gone to

the Poorhouse. The husband of eighty years had left her in a fit of weak anger; they could not "get along together;" "*he* was too fretful and childish."

"H'm," sympathetically ejaculated the Overseer. "No other relatives living, eh?"

The old woman smiled a weird smile, and taking the candle, approached an old chest of drawers, so rickety that it had been propped against the miserable bed to prevent its falling upon the floor. After a hurried search in the bottom drawers she brought out a letter in a faded envelope, and handed it to the visitors. It had been dated from a mining village in the far West, in years gone by. The papers had a greasy look and a dull hue of age; the writing had turned pale. It told of a happy marriage and prospects of wealth, fair success in the race for fortune and promises of assistance from a strong son.

"That was the last," she muttered, "—, 1849."

How many times that letter had been fondly read and re-read until its paper had become too old to crepitate when the withered hand crushed it in miserable despair, only perhaps to remorsefully stroke it smooth again and press out the obscuring creases. Years came and went wearily; want came and passed not away; winter after winter, each seemingly sharper than the last, whitened the street without, and shrieked in ghostly fashion at the keyhole; the little mining village in the far West had grown to a great city; but the Silence remained forever unbroken, and trust in the hand that had written the faded yellow words, "Dear mother" slowly died out, as the red life of an ember dies out in the gray ash. And when the door closed with a dry groan behind the departing feet of the Overseer, we felt strangely certain that the old letter would be once more read that

night by a throbbing candle flame, ere returned to its dusty resting-place in the dusty room.

. . . These wanderings in the haunts of the poor, among shadowy tenement houses and dilapidated cottages, and blind, foul alleys with quaint names suggesting deformity and darkness, somehow compelled a phantasmal retrospect of the experience, which cling to the mind with nightmare tenacity. It came in the form of a grisly and spectral vision—a dream of reeling buildings of black plank, with devious corridors and deformed stairways; with interminable suites of crooked rooms, having sloping floors and curving walls; with crazy stoves and heavy smells; with long rags and ragged gowns haunting the pale walls like phantom visitors or elfish mockeries of the dead; and all the chambers haunted by sharp shadows and sharp faces that made them piteous with the bitterness of withered hopes, or weird by fearful waiting for the coming of the dreamless slumber, as a great Shadow, which, silently falling over lesser darknesses, absorbs them into Itself. The fearsome fancy of thus waiting for the end in loneliness—with only the company of memories, and the wild phantasmagory wrought upon the walls by firelight; wondering, possibly, at the grimness of one's own shadow; peering, perhaps, into some clouded fragment of quicksilvered glass to watch the skull-outline slowly wearing its way through the flesh-mask of the face—brought with it a sense of strange chill, such as might follow the voiceless passing of a spirit.

. . . "Sixteen years in bed," said the Overseer with one of those looks which appear to demand a sympathetic expression of commiseration from the person addressed under penalty of feeling that you have committed a breach of etiquette. The scene lay in the second story of a sooty frame,

perched on the ragged edge of Eggleston Avenue Hill. The sufferer was an aged man, whose limbs and body were swollen by disease to a monstrous size, and for whom the mercy of death could not have been far distant. The room was similar to other rooms already described, excepting that in the center of the weak floor a yawning, ragged hole had been partly covered by a broken-bottomed washtub; and the conventional figure of the Aged Woman, with weirdly-sharp features, was not absent. The slowly dying man moaned feebly at intervals, and muttered patient prayers in the Irish tongue.

"Betther, is it?" said the Aged Woman, in a husky whisper, casting, with her hands uplifted, a crooked shadow, as of Walpurgis Night, upon the wall: "Shure, honey, the Lord knows there's no more betther fur the likes iv him."

"Trying to get him to sleep, I suppose," nodded the Overseer, lowering his voice to a sympathetic whisper.

"No whisht, honey; it's afeared we are of Her," pointing to the hole in the floor, "the Divil down below."

There came up through the broken planking, even as she spoke, a voice of cursing, the voice of a furious woman, and a sound of heavy blows, mingled with the cry of a beaten child. Some little one was being terribly whipped, and its treble was strained to that hoarse scream which betrays an agony of helpless pain and fear, and pleading to merciless ears. To the listener it seemed that the whipping would never end. The sharp blows descended without regularity in a rapid shower which seemed to promise that the punishment could only be terminated by fatigue on the part of the punisher; the screams gradually grew hoarser and hoarser, with longer intervals between each until they ceased altogether, and only a choking gurgle was audible,

Then the sound of whipping ceased; there was a sudden noise as of something flung heavily down, and then another hoarse curse.

"Why, she must be killing her children," muttered the Overseer.

"To be sure she is," whispered the Aged Woman, looking awfully at the hole in the floor as though fearing lest the "Divil" might suddenly rise up through it.

"But how often does this thing go on?"

"How often, is it? Shure there's no ind to it at all, at all. Ah, she bates the childher whinever she takes a dhrap too much, bad cess to her!—an' may God forgive me fur spakin' that word—an' she's dhrunk all the time, so she is, night and day. Thin, if I wor to spake a word to the Divil, she breaks up the flure undher us wid a pole; an' many's the night I've stud over the hole, thryin' to kape the flure down, an' she a-breaking it up betune me feet."

The very grotesqueness of this misery only rendered it all the more hideous, and one felt it impossible to smile at the trembling terror of the poor old creature. After all, it seemed to us there might be a greater horror in store for the helpless poor, than that of awaiting death among the shadows alone. This haggard woman, working and watching by her dying husband, in shivering fear of the horror below; the moans of the poor sufferer, the agonized scream of the tortured child, the savage whipping and violent cursing, the broken floor pried up in drunken fury,—all seemed the sights and sounds of a hideous dream, rather than the closing scene of a poor life's melodrama.

We visited Her—a strong, broad, flamboyant-haired woman, with hard, bloated features, and words haunted by the odor of spirits. Ignorant of what we had already heard,



she brought the children forward for the visitor's admiration. They were not hungry-looking or thin, but there were written in their faces little tragedies of another character than hunger or cold can write. They watched with frightened eyes their mother's slightest action. Their little features were molded in the strictest obedience to the varying expression of her own. She smiled in the effort to seem agreeable, and they smiled also, poor little souls; but such smiles! God help them!

. . . Why should gray-haired folk, half palsied by the tightening grasp of the Skeleton's hand, mutually related in the strong kinship of misfortune, themselves the subject of sustaining charity, strive to do each other evil? We received ample evidence that they do. The Overseer daily hears jealous complaints from withered lips about alleged immoral conduct or imposition upon the part of other city poor. Wretched creatures supported by the city's alms in wretched hovels, seem so anxious to deprive other wretched creatures even of the comforts possible to be enjoyed in wretched hovels. It occurred to one, on hearing these whispered stories, that there must be something more than is ordinarily supposed in those quaint proverbs regarding the gossip and mischief-making tendencies of venerable people. But happily for the unfortunate, the keen Overseer absorbs little of such gossip, though seeming patiently attentive to all who receive charity from his hand. Understanding the poor failings of human nature, he humors them when he can, rather than inflict pain by rebuke.

. . . There was a pretty pathos in the little evidences of æsthetic taste peculiar to the negro people which no degree of misery seems capable of crushing out, and which encounters one in the most unlikely places and in the midst of

the uttermost wretchedness. It was nothing short of startling to find that a certain iron railing which guards the opening of a cellar stairway in Bucktown, bore on its lower part that unmistakable Greek border-design which is formed by a single line worked into a beautiful labyrinth of right angles, and which Athenian women embroidered upon their robes three thousand years ago. But it was even more startling to find one's self, in an underground den, face to face with a very faded engraving of the famous face known to art by the name of "Beatrice Cenci," or a pale print after Raphael Morghen. One little picture we noticed on the wall of a miserable frame shanty near Culvert street, which had become little better than an outline under the dimming veil of dinginess and dust, had been carefully fixed into a frame evidently cut out of kindling wood with a penknife. It was an engraving of the head of one of Raphael's Madonnas. In extraordinary contrast hung, nailed to the plank wall beneath it, a ferrotype portrait of some rude-featured white lad; and a frightful chromo, representing one mud-colored child carrying another over a green brook, was pasted close by. Then there was, also, a dusty print of a child feeding two doves, which was decidedly pretty. It was evident that these things, together with other pitiful little articles which adorned the wall, had been picked up at random, without any actual knowledge of their artistic merit, but simply because they seemed pretty to the poor child-minds who love trifles. Probably the frightful chromo was considered by its proprietor as the gem of her little art gallery.

She was slowly dying at the time of our visit; some colored friends were sitting by her bedside; a little brown child, with frizzly hair standing out in a wild, bushy way

from its head, was crying in a corner; and an old colored preacher was singing the refrain of a queer hymn which he must have supposed afforded great spiritual consolation:

“Dese ole bones of mine, oh—  
Dese ole bones of mine, oh—  
Dese ole bones of mine  
Will all come togeder in de morning.”

The sufferer had her eyes fixed upon that little print, framed so clumsily in bits of kindling-wood; and it seemed to us that she was thinking less of the Great Morning about to dawn upon her, than of the rude, but perhaps kind hand of the dead steamboatman who carved the poor, coarse frame, and whose resting place remains unmarked even by a ripple on the River's breast.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The ellipses in the above article are Hearn's. The article is reprinted completely. The editor.









